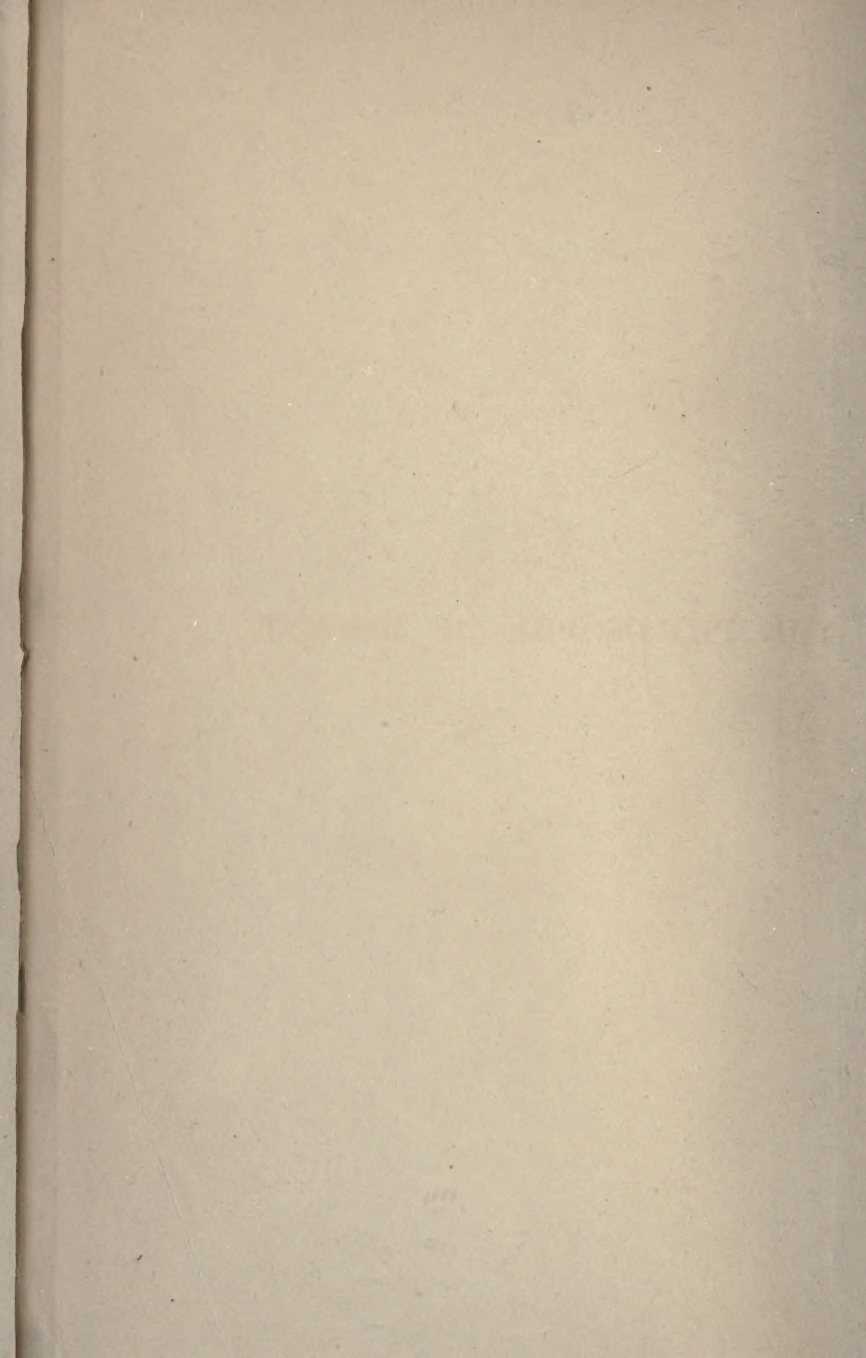


PRESENTED
TO
THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
BY

J. Courtesay James Esq.

1902



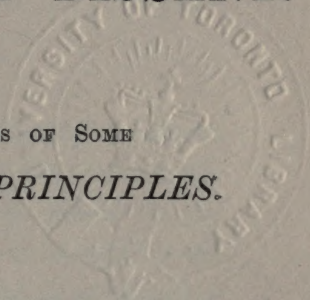
THE PHILOSOPHY OF DISSENT.

“Even now, after eighteen centuries of Christianity, we may be involved in some tremendous error, of which the Christianity of the future will make us ashamed.”—*Vinet*.

theol.

THE
PHILOSOPHY OF DISSENT.

ANALYTICAL OUTLINES OF SOME
FREE CHURCH PRINCIPLES.



BY
J. COURTENAY JAMES, PH.D.

58812
23/10/02

London :

JAMES CLARKE & CO., 13 & 14, FLEET STREET, E.C.

1900.



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2008 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation

PREFACE.

THE problem of the Church is seriously considered by only a small portion of the community. Religious indifference is sadly too general in our day, and it is the source of much scepticism and ungodliness. The lack of interest in ecclesiastical questions is indicative of national unhealthiness. The loosely-attached members of the various Churches are generally unversed in the history, doctrines, and polity of their respective Denominations. This touches a serious weakness in Nonconformity. Romanists and Anglicans give much attention to the instruction of their young people in the principles and dogmas of their Churches; hence the tenacity with which the members of these Churches hold to their ingrained beliefs. Nonconformists are not so systematically trained in the distinctive tenets of their theology and government, and consequently are more easily detached from the Church of their fathers.

The Lectures, of which this volume contains the substance, were prepared to meet what I felt to be a need in my own congregations. They are published at the request of friends who believe they contain a timely and salutary message to the whole Christian Church. They are, however, intended chiefly for intelligent young Nonconformists who are not satisfied with a mere denunciation of Roman and High Anglican dogmas, but who seek the positive grounds upon which Free Church doctrine and polity are based.

The subjects dealt with in the following pages are only a part of a larger series. If this volume meets with sufficient appreciation it will be followed by another containing Lectures on the Free Churches in their relation to Theology, Religious Authority, the Sacraments, Social Questions, and other topics. In view of this wider scheme the title of the work has been chosen. By the word "Philosophy" is meant a *rational explanation* of the existence and principles of the Free Churches. By the word "Dissent" is meant *separation from the service of an Established Church*. Some Free Churchmen object to the word "Dissent" because

it is a negative term ; but I deliberately employ the word, partly on the ground of its historical associations, and partly because it was never more necessary to *dissent* from certain claims of the Establishment than it is to-day.

I cannot claim much originality either for the subjects discussed or for the views advanced, but I venture to hope that the analytical arrangement of the book will make it easy to follow and suggestive to the reader. My indebtedness to various standard authors is, in most cases, indicated by footnotes throughout the volume. Other obligations are frankly acknowledged in this place. In a few instances I have criticised the positions of the Free Churches. The tendency to extreme Independency or Ecclesiastico-Democracy is thought to be equally unjustifiable, with the tendency to extreme Connexionalism or Presbyterio-Methodism. Considerable space is given to the subject of the "Church and State," because I am convinced that the dissolution of the unholy alliance is the only effectual solution of our National Religious Problem.

Throughout I have endeavoured to be fair in

the representation of others' opinions, and accurate in the reference to historical facts. I can scarcely hope to have escaped all ecclesiastical bias any more than all indefensible statement. But I have consistently sought the truth, and shall be happy to eliminate discovered error.

In concluding these prefatory remarks I have to acknowledge, with special gratitude, the assistance of the Rev. Josiah Flew, M.A., for many valuable suggestions, for reading the proof-sheets, and for preparing the Index.

J. COURTENAY JAMES.

October, 1900.

CONTENTS.

I.

THE RELIGIOUS CRISIS.

Introduction—The Problem.

	PAGE
I. THE PHILOSOPHIC BASIS OF SACERDOTALISM ...	5—16
1. A false conception of God	5
2. The influence of cultured paganism	8
3. The fascination of mystery	11
4. The effects of metaphysical scepticism ...	13
II. THE INEVITABLENESS OF REVOLT AGAINST ECCLESIASTICAL TYRANNY	17—30
1. The place of Reformation	17
2. The Need for Comprehensive views	21
3. Spirituality seeks to free itself from ex- ternalism	23
4. The demands of the New Age... ..	27
III. THE BASIS OF THE EVANGELICAL PROTESTANT HOPE	30—46
1. Some grounds for Pessimism	31
2. Significant signs for Optimism	35
(1) Gleams amid political gloom. (2) Ad- justment of the individual to Society. (3) Retreat of advanced Biblical Criticism. (4) Protestantism and the Experimental Method.	
3. The alliance between Protestantism and Prosperity... ..	44

II.

CONCEPTION OF THE CHURCH.

Introduction—History of the Word "Church."

	PAGE
I. THE JEWISH SYNAGOGUE AND THE CHRISTIAN ECCLESIA	50—60
A. Some points of likeness:—	
1. The Jewish Congregation was not a fortuitous gathering	54
2. The Jewish Congregation was a Theo- cracy	55
B. Some points of unlikeness:—	
1. The New Testament Church not so identified with the nation	57
2. The New Testament Church recognises a truer religious liberty	58
II. THE IDEA AND USE OF THE WORD CHURCH IN THE NEW TESTAMENT	60—77
1. The connotation of the term when it came into the New Testament	60
2. The word "kingdom" in relation to the Church	62
3. The two chief senses in which the term is employed	66
(1) The universal Church. (2) The local congregation.	
4. The chief metaphors setting forth the mani- fold phases of the Church	69
5. The conception of Church-membership	71
(1) The New Testament did not contem- plate unattached Christians. (2) Fellowship a <i>sine qua non</i> of spiritual growth. (3) Membership contingent upon certain conditions.	

	PAGE
III. THE EVANGELICAL PROTESTANT (OR FREE-CHURCH) VIEW OF THE CHURCH	77—91
1. The Nonconformist claim often misrepresented	78
2. The Church is not an end in itself	80
3. Divisions inevitable and sometimes beneficial	82
4. Organic union, however desirable, is not essential	85
5. The universal presence of Christ	88

III.

THE DOCTRINE OF ORDERS.

Introduction—How to approach a controversial subject.

I. THE SCRIPTURAL DOCTRINE OF THE MINISTRY	96—113
1. The Jewish Priesthood	96
2. Christ's attitude towards the Jewish priesthood	97
3. Typical Illustrations	100
(1) The case of the Apostle Paul. (2) The case of the Apostle Judas.	
4. New Testament terminology	106
5. The Two Orders of the Apostolic Church ...	108
(1) The Presbyteriate. (2) The Diaconate.	
II. THE SACERDOTAL DOCTRINE OF THE MINISTRY	113—121
1. The tendency to check Reformation ...	113
2. The Sacerdotal claim	115
3. The value of the Sacerdotal claim	117
(1) The proof adduced. (2) The broken chain.	
III. THE FREE CHURCH DOCTRINE OF THE MINISTRY	122—133
1. Résumé of Free Church teaching	123
2. History contradicts dogma	124
(1) The conclusions of Bishop Lightfoot.	
(2) The effects of Sacerdotalism on national life.	

	PAGE
3. Ordination does not create grace	127
4. Wesley's view of ordination	130
(1) Wesley's earlier and later position.	
(2) Ordinations after Wesley.	

IV.

CHURCH GOVERNMENT.

Introduction—Not details, but general principles found in the New Testament.

I. TYPES OF ECCLESIASTICAL POLITY	138—147
1. Congregationalism	139
2. Presbyterianism... ..	141
3. Episcopalianism... ..	144
II. NEW TESTAMENT PRECEDENTS	147—165
1. The form of the New Testament Church not a finality	148
2. The basis of the earliest type of organisation... ..	150
3. The mode of appointing Church officers	153
(1) Elders. (2) Deacons.	
4. Local autonomy... ..	159
5. Growth of inter-communion	160
(1) The Jerusalem Church a common standard. (2) Financial co-operation. (3) Plurality of congregations and pastors.	
III. CONNEXIONALISM VERSUS INDEPENDENCY	165—177
1. Defects of extreme Independency	166
(1) Lack of strength from union. (2) Insufficient guarantee of purity. (3) Deprecates the authority of the pastorate. (4) Inadequate lay-agency. (5) Incompetent missionary force.	

	PAGE
2. Advantages of some Connexionalism ...	170
(1) Anomalies respecting the ministry.	
(2) Benefits of a common Exchequer.	
(3) Incitement to a wider outlook.	

V.

THE POSITION OF THE LAITY.

Introduction.—Meaning and use of the term.

I.	THE POSITION OF THE LAITY IN THE NEW TESTAMENT	182—190
	1. The fundamental equality of men	183
	2. The priesthood of all believers... ..	184
	3. The co-operation of the people in Church-administration '	186
	(1) In the election of Church officers.	
	(2) In the administration of Church Sacraments.	
II.	THE POSITION OF THE LAITY IN CHURCHES OF THE EPISCOPAL TYPE	190—200
	1. General statement of the position	190
	2. The Laity in the Church of Rome	193
	(1) Celibacy of the clergy. (2) Withdrawal of the Cup. (3) Seclusion of the clergy.	
	(4) Exclusion of the laity.	
	3. The Laity in the Church of England	199
III.	THE POSITION OF THE LAITY IN CHURCHES OF THE REFORMED TYPE	200—218
	1. The Lutheran Church	201
	2. The Calvinistic Church	202
	3. The Presbyterian Church	204
	4. The Congregational Church	206

	PAGE
5. The Methodist Church	207
(1) The position of the laity is unique:	
(a) The modern position of the laity is an outgrowth; (b) The modern position of the laity is based upon New Testament precedent. (2) The position of the laity criticised: (a) The auto- cracy of the pastorate; (b) The exclu- sion of the members.	

VI.

CHURCH AND STATE.

PART I.—HISTORY OF THE ESTABLISHMENT.

Introduction.—Why should Dissenters interfere?

I. TYPES OF CHURCH AND STATE RELATIONSHIP	222—231
1. Mutual Equality	223
2. Supremacy of the Church	224
3. Supremacy of the State	226
4. Reciprocal independence	229
II. THE STATE CHURCH IS COMPARATIVELY A MODERN INVENTION	231—241
1. No true analogy in the Hebrew Common- wealth	232
2. No parallel in the States of antiquity ...	234
3. Unknown to Mediæval Christianity ...	236
4. Properly dates from the sixteenth century ...	238
III. INCONSISTENCIES OF PROTESTANTISM IN ACCEPT- ING STATE CONTROL	241—248
1. It violated a principle which gave it momentum	241
2. It ignored its Divine credentials	243
3. It inevitably adopted a persecuting attitude	245
4. Its uniformity checks spontaneity	247

VII.

CHURCH AND STATE.

PART II.—THE RATIONALE OF DISESTABLISHMENT.

Introduction—No idea utterly foreign to environment.

	PAGE
I. PERMANENT STATE RELIGION IS AN IMPOSSIBILITY	252—262
1. Conscience is awakening to its own independence	252
2. Secular control is antagonistic to the spirit of Christianity	254
3. An established and endowed Church prevents national and religious equality	257
4. The State-Church must ultimately decide between identity and separation	260
II. ADVANTAGES OF DISESTABLISHMENT	262—274
(1) Reforms demanded. (2) Remedies suggested.	
1. Advantages to the State	266
(1) The constitution of Parliament renders it unfit to control the doctrine and discipline of the Church. (2) Disestablishment would remove one of the chief sources of national discord.	
2. Advantages to the Church	269
(1) The Church would have the power of self-reform. (2) The spiritual dynamics of the Church would be greatly increased.	

VIII.

THE IDEA OF PROGRESS.

Introduction—Clinging superstitions.

	PAGE
I. GENERAL GROUNDS... ..	278—288
1. Progress is not in a straight line	278
2. Permanent elements and different manifestations	279
3. Motion is in the direction of least resistance	282
4. Conservation of principle is not conservatism in method	285
II. PARTICULAR LAWS	288—303
1. Surrender of the outgrown	288
2. Struggle for existence	292
3. Adaptation to environment	295
4. Inclusion of diverse elements	298
4. Limitless possibility	302
INDEX	305—307

I.
THE RELIGIOUS CRISIS.

THE RELIGIOUS CRISIS.

FIFTY years ago Agassiz, writing as a scientist, said: "We have reached a point where the results of science touch the problem of existence, and all thoughtful men are listening for the verdict which solves the great mystery." Unabated enthusiasm has characterised the investigations of the last half-century; but physical research is no nearer the solution of the great mystery of life. Evolution is not the cause, but the process in the development of life. For a knowledge of origins we do not listen to Darwin and Haeckel, but to the first great law-giver. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." The rise and progress of natural science, which at one time threatened the citadel of religion, has resulted in a more indisputable proof of God's existence and the prevalence of an Almighty Will. Many who set out upon a great metaphysical exploration predisposed toward Atheism, after careful inquiry into the origin and philosophy of existence, return

pronounced theists. Similar crises are to be found in the history of the Church. The clouds have gathered more dense over the ecclesiastical sky, until the overthrow of religion appeared imminent. Thus was it under the despots of imperial Rome; thus was it under the temporal sway of Hildebrand; thus was it under the papal supremacy in England. But these periods of threatening darkness were the strange precursors of a brighter day. Amid the terrible moral gloom, a succession of great lights appeared in the ecclesiastical heavens. Constantine revolted against the cultured paganism of the Roman State, accepted Christianity, and in some sense made it a State religion. Wycliffe rose up against the intolerant impositions of the Papacy upon the English Church, and inaugurated a purer creed and ritual. Luther protested against the enormous assumptions and loathsome corruptions of Roman Catholicism, and initiated the great Reformation tide.

Once more the gloom has gathered in our country. So unobtrusively has the sky been darkened, that multitudes have been unconscious of the threatening storm. Sixty years ago a cloud no bigger than a man's hand arose over Oxford. It has grown so noiselessly that men have not observed its presence or nature. But it has

spread so vastly that to-day the whole firmament of the Anglican Church is wrapped in its perplexing darkness. The storm is beginning to break ; we cannot yet estimate the moral damage, but we anxiously await the result of the present crisis in the Established Church of our land.

I.—The Philosophic Basis of Sacerdotalism.

The system which through the ages has manifested itself in hierarchical pretensions and elaborate ceremonial has deep springs, and its source must be sought far back in the recesses of human nature and history. A mere *primâ facie* investigation will not disclose the secret of sacerdotalism. This is to be sought in the trend of metaphysical thought, in the vicissitudes of national and ecclesiastical history, and in the psychological constitution of human nature. There are more obvious facts, such as religious arrogance, mental delusion, and the love of power, which are frequently adduced as the basis of priestly claims. We would here trace the deeper and less obvious sources of Romish and High Anglican dogmas.

1. A FALSE CONCEPTION OF GOD.

Nothing is more instructive than a comparison

of Greek and Latin ideas of God and the universe. The Fathers of the Greek Church, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, and Athanasius, borrowing their philosophy largely from the Stoics, maintained that God was immanent in the universe and eternally operating through natural laws. According to their view, Deity was not remote from the world, not a localised personality acting upon the world from a distance by means of portent and prodigy. The world was not a dead machine, mechanically working after some pre-established order, and only occasionally realising the presence and interposition of God. But they taught that God is the eternal and ever-present life and motion of the world, that through His real presence the universe in all its complications continues and acts from hour to hour, and that the perfect sequence of natural events is the unfailing manifestation of Divine intelligence and munificence. On the other hand, the conception of the Fathers of the Latin Church, notably Augustine, was very different. Their notion of God may be traced to ancestor-worship and a ghost-deity as the originator of all things. In the mono-theism that resulted from this line of thought, the world was regarded as an inert mass impelled by blind force. God was viewed as existing apart from the

world in solitary and inaccessible majesty, as Carlyle says, "an absentee God, sitting idle since the first Sabbath, at the outside of His universe, and seeing it go." This notion of God as distant from the world prevailed among the disciples of Epicurus, and is depicted with marvellous skill in the great poem of Lucretius, "De Rerum Natura," one of the greatest triumphs of the Latin intellect. This conception of God and the world was suited to the low standard of culture in the Western world and to the genius of Latin theologians who began to construct the Imperial Church. The Augustinian theology prevailed, and in the Dark Ages became inwrought in the very warp and woof of Latin Christianity, and is still dominant in Protestantism as well as Roman Catholicism.

How this conception of God would affect practical religion will at once be apparent. The distant, localised Deity could only be thought of under terms of humanity; hence the anthropomorphic character of Western theology. The absentee God was actuated by human passions, and was to be appeased and propitiated by hostages and sacrifices. This work of reconciling the distant God required the mediation of specially qualified agents. This may be termed the archæological genesis of the order of the priesthood

and the ritual of sacrifice and sacrament. The mechanical view of our Lord's relation to the Church, in like manner, banishes Him to heaven, and demands a "Vicar" to represent Him on earth. The Scriptural view of the immanence of God represents Christ as ever present with His people, in the midst of them, and in vital union with every believer. This conception saves us from all schismatical notions, removes the necessity of a vicarious priesthood, and establishes the direct communion of every Christian with the Living Head of the Church.

2. THE INFLUENCE OF CULTURED PAGANISM.

Uhlhorn, in his great work, "The Conflict of Christianity with Heathenism," has vividly depicted the successive assailants of the primitive Church. Christianity not only came into contact with Greek philosophy and Roman imperialism, but with the prevailing superstitious *cultus* of the Western world. And palpably the Christian Church has been greatly influenced by the various forms of pagan thought and ritual with which it came into conflict. The Jewish legalist, the Oriental theosophist, the Greek metaphysician, the Alexandrian sophist, the Roman epicurean, all left some impress upon the plastic creed and discipline

of the struggling religion and Church of Christ. At an early age some refined spirits among the heathen accepted Christianity, but they naturally clung to many of their old forms and ceremonies. In course of time certain phases of these pagan rites became incorporated in the theology and ritual of the Christian Church. As Christianity more widely influenced the patrician classes in the Roman Empire, so the Church became more and more a civic and political institution. The priests and ecclesiastical dignitaries became important factors in national life. Their most subtle doctrines and practices were confirmed by the political establishment of religion by Constantine early in the fourth century. No more fatal mistake was ever made than to bring the Church into the Erastian fetters of the State. The evil accretions in the Church, derived from theosophic paganism, would have been thrown off if the ecclesiastical organism had been free and the individual conscience at liberty to develop according to its own spontaneous and divinely inspired ideas. But the strong arm of the State defended the priest against the people, maintained ritual against conscience, and arbitrarily perpetuated the blighting evils, which paralyse and curse Roman and High Anglican Communion at the present time.

It is well to understand this position. The cumbrous and imposing ritual of the Latin Church has neither the justification of Scripture nor of the Apostolic Church. It is largely a growth from pagan sources, fostered by the natural superstition of the human mind, and cunningly employed by the priestcraft to bring men into the most abject religious bondage. We can only regard the exclusive cult of the Romish and High Anglican Churches as a gigantic *brutum fulmen*, to frighten superstitious people and to gain a cruel authority over their consciences and wills. "Many institutions and elements of institutions which have sometimes been thought to belong to primitive Christianity belong, in fact, to the Middle Ages. In the minds of many persons, no doubt, the past centuries of Christianity seem to be all alike shrouded in a common mist, and the institutions of one age are not distinguishable from those of another; but it is impossible to look without regret at the reckless statements which are frequently made in reference to practices which, however great their practical value, and however great the sanction which long usage has given them, still rest upon proved utility and not upon a positive Divine command."*

* Hatch, *Growth of Church Institutions*, pp. 225-6.

3. THE FASCINATION OF MYSTERY.

Religion must ever partake of the nature of the mysterious; this fact gives it perennial charm and freshness. In every age of the world this fact has been seized by a certain caste and subtly wrought into a system. Under the Jewish theosophy this system was known as the *Cabala*. This term recalls the fact that among the Jews and other Eastern people, knowledge rested on a sort of succession, and the best claim for its reception was an unbroken chain of traditionary evidence. The Jews were most careful in the establishment of the succession of the custodians of the truth. While the truth was revealed in a general way in the Law, the Prophets, and the Talmud, the Cabala provided a verbal exposition of these with a deeper meaning not generally known to the people. Hence the Cabala became the expression of a particular theological and philosophical system. And as nearly all Jewish instruction was verbal and based largely on memory, the Cabala became at length a mystery whose secrets were known only to the initiated. "This science consists chiefly in understanding the combination of certain letters, words, and numbers, which are alleged to be significant. Every letter, word,

number, and accent of the Law is supposed to contain a mystery, and the Cabalists pretend even to foretell future events by the study of this science." The same principle may be seen in Eastern religions to-day. There are mysteries in Hindooism and Buddhism unrevealed to the common people. The orders of Brahminic priests alone possess the secrets. Hence they can always play upon the inherent curiosity of the masses. The desire to peer into the mysterious is one of the most characteristic elements in human nature. The priesthood has not been slow in taking advantage of this fundamental peculiarity of the race.

See how this applies to the subject before us. Just as the Cabalists claimed that their mysterious science was delivered to the Jews by direct revelation and transmitted by a duly constituted order of custodians, so in the Latin Church there is an order claiming special knowledge and authority received directly from God through the channel of Apostolical succession. To make the mystery more certain and impressive the people are forbidden to read and to put their own interpretation on the Scriptures. The true meaning, it is said, can be vouchsafed only through the Church by means of the hierarchy—the Christian Cabala. Considering the natural pride of the human heart,

it is perhaps not surprising that men should claim this special illumination and spiritual authority. But considering the advancement of learning on the eve of the twentieth century, it is surprising that men should believe in this system of sophistry and allow themselves to be gulled and enslaved by it. But such is the weakness of human nature in matters of religion. Here men are often exceedingly irrational. There are persons who on no account would relinquish their business affairs to the control of another, but who unconditionally surrender their consciences and wills to the meretricious acts of arrogant priests. Religion is a difficult problem, and multitudes will not puzzle themselves in solving its mysteries. They are glad to silence the voice of the soul by entrusting their spiritual welfare to the specious guarantees of the Romish and High Anglican Churches.

4. THE EFFECTS OF METAPHYSICAL SCEPTICISM.

Disbelief in the validity of the reason has been one of the underlying causes of the Romeward movement within the Anglican Church during the last fifty years. Newman having affirmed the impotence of the reason for the discovery of the truth, an affirmation which logically involves the negation of knowledge, was compelled to seek some other

basis for the authentication of the truth. This he found, as he supposed, in the Church, and in its completest form in the Roman Catholic Church. The scepticism of Newman was logically akin to that of Hume. To the minds of these writers reason was not a *thing in itself*. To Hume it was a series of "impressions and ideas," to Newman it was a series of "antecedents and consequents." In each case the difficulty is the same, to know how the series began, and having begun, how it reached its present condition. This interpretation of reason necessarily ends in religious nescience. If reason in man be not an original gift of God religion is not a part of its primitive content, and the natural issue of reason is Atheism. This was Newman's conclusion. But man has a religion, and if it did not come through reason another source must be sought. This Newman found in conscience or revelation. Conscience, however, needs a guide, and revelation needs an authoritative vehicle. This was found in the "Divinity of Traditionary Religion." It is said that all men with a religious faith have had "more or less the guidance of tradition, in addition to those internal notions of right and wrong which the Spirit has put into the heart of each individual." The deduction is that authority

in religion comes from without, and no man can safely trust his "private judgment." The use of the reason is simply *instrumental*—to find out the highest external authority and the most faithful embodiment of truth. Without such an authority there can be no religion and no Church. This authority, in the writings of Newman, is sometimes spoken of as tradition, and sometimes as the Church. But these are complementary terms. Tradition supplies the religious material, and the Church makes the material authoritative. Hence it follows that the final seat of authority in religion is the Church. To command authority the Church must claim infallibility. The Church of Rome makes this claim in the sphere of religion: "it is not in all cases infallible, it may err beyond its special province, but it has ever in all cases a claim on our obedience."*

The application of this section will be obvious. Deny the authority of the reason and the place of private judgment in matters of religion, and an external authority becomes necessary. Roman and Anglo-Catholics suppose this authority to be vested in the See of St. Peter. In reply to all this we would point out: (1) Reason is as much a Divine gift and original endowment as conscience.

* Newman, *The Development of Doctrine*, p. 125.

Both are fallible, but, having the same origin, they are equally to be trusted. (2) Christ never entrusted any dogmatic authority to the Church over the consciences of men, such as is assumed by the Romish branch of Christendom. (3) The New Testament consistently represents religion as a *personal* matter, a relation between the individual soul and God. No human intermediary is permitted, no ecclesiastical authority is essential. Even the Bible is not an authority to Protestants in the same sense that the Pope is an authority to Romanists. To Protestants the Bible supplies the all-sufficient material—the *testimonium Spiritus Sancti externum*, to be approved and applied by the *testimonium Spiritus Sancti internum*. The Bible contains the truth of the existence of God and the Redemption of man, but it can only be believed as the mind is convinced of its truth and satisfied with its authority. Jeremy Taylor said: “Whatever is against right reason, that no faith can oblige us to believe.” The Apostle Paul said the same thing: “Let each man be fully assured in his own mind.”*

* ἑκαστος ἐν τῷ ἰδίῳ νοί. That is, “in the moral consciousness of his own reason, therefore, independently of others’ judgment, assured in himself of the motives of actions.”—Meyer on Rom. xiv. 5.

II.—The Inevitableness of Revolt Against Ecclesiastical Tyranny.

The great transforming crises in the history of nations and Churches must be traced to the unobtrusive leaven of Christianity silently doing its work in spite of adverse external circumstances. This explains the fact that notable revolutions have been brought about without the aid of legislative art or physical force. There are two great social revolutions that stand out in the history of England—that in the thirteenth century, which put an end to the tyranny of nation over nation, and that in the early nineteenth century, which put an end to the property of man in man. Both of these were silently and imperceptibly accomplished. The former effaced the distinction between Norman and Saxon, and the latter the distinction between master and slave. Macaulay rightly says: “It would be most unjust not to acknowledge that the chief agent in these two great deliverances was religion.”

1. THE PLACE OF REFORMATION.

We do not here enter into the particulars of those forces which have brought about the present confusion in the State Church. No doubt the free spirit of criticism which has characterised the last

twenty-five years has brought many obscure facts to light, and has made all types of exclusivism more and more intolerable. The Higher Criticism and the spread of general knowledge have opened the way for an unprecedented religious advancement. Professor Briggs says: "We are preparing the way for a new reformation that is to put that of the sixteenth century in the shade." Nations are purified by revolutions, Churches by reformations. Both have the same philosophic basis. They arise from a general spirit of dissatisfaction with things as they exist. Cruel laws and unjust administration are always productive of unrest, agitation, rebellion, anarchy. It was the Revolution which, though at first it threatened to break up the Constitution, really saved the French nation. It was the Revolution of the seventeenth century, which, seeming at first to shatter our imperial prestige, really rescued England from ecclesiastical tyranny and royal despotism. A revolution means the imperative demand of the citizens for the redress of wrongs; the forcing of reluctant rulers to grant just and impartial measures to the people. This is characteristic of much modern legislation. Rulers instead of leading in the march of progress by voluntarily initiating wise laws, wait to be forced

to action by the irresistible power of public opinion. Reformation in the Church arises from much the same causes as revolution in the State. There grows up a spirit of intense dissatisfaction with the ecclesiastical *régime*. The resolute clinging to outgrown forms, the obstinate refusal to adapt methods to new conditions, and the culpable conservatism and bigotry of the hierarchy in Synod and Convocation, become positive grievances and intolerable insults. The unwarrantable assumptions of the clergy, and the ruthless exclusion of the laity, bring upon the Church the withering blight of sacerdotalism and the unscriptural denial of free, personal access to God. Reformation in the Church is frequently the outcome of agitation among serious persons, who believe in the freedom of conscience, liberty of thought, the open Bible, and the unstinted Gospel for all mankind. But here, too, reforms are generally forced upon the Church by the people, the alarmed public, and not voluntarily initiated by lords spiritual and temporal. The present crisis in the Established Church of England is a solemn illustration. The disloyalty of many of the clergy to their ordination vows, and the unblushing lawlessness of many priests in respect of their diocesans, are facts condemned alike by Parliament and people. Yet the Government,

which is the real head of the Anglican Church, is reluctant to interfere, the Bishops are anomalously impotent, the ecclesiastical chaos intensifies, and the national Church, quasi-Protestant, semi-Romanized, presents one of the saddest spectacles in all the history of the world. It is safer to predict after an event has occurred, but we are bold enough to think that the final settlement of the Church-problem in England will be along the following lines. The Ritualistic section of the Established Church, having already accepted the Romish creed and practice, will sooner or later secede from the Anglican, and formally join the papal Church. The Protestant section will slowly relinquish its State support, and throw off the secular authority in matters of doctrine and discipline, and will ultimately unite with Nonconformity. This prediction is based upon four considerations. (1) Real Jesuits cannot find permanent satisfaction under Protestant jurisdiction; (2) The connection of Church and State is unnatural, and in the course of time must be dissolved; (3) Protestantism cannot consistently maintain the dogma of Apostolical Succession, and, that abandoned, the validity of Presbyterian ordination must be universally recognised; (4) Granted the foregoing, then no essential difference will

remain between Protestant Episcopalians and Presbyterians, and their co-operation and unity will develop with time.

2. NEED FOR COMPREHENSIVE VIEWS.

We must carefully guard against the Ultramontane error of making the clergy synonymous with the Church. The exclusiveness of the Church is answerable for much of the lawlessness of the people, and for the anti-religious character of many social and political institutions. Christianity was never intended for the benefit of a select few, or for the enlightenment of a portion of the earth, or for the elevation of certain special phases of life and history. No nation, no people, no organisation should be unaffected by the Church. It should reach and influence all phases of society and fashion them according to the highest Christian ideals. Viewed in this comprehensive light, the problem of the Church becomes the most momentous that can occupy human thought. In the presence of this subject mere social and political questions will be dwarfed into secondary importance. The problem really includes the question of man's relation to God and of man's relation to man. This is a problem that must frequently recur in the evolution of human

history. The present crisis was, perhaps unwittingly, foretold twenty-five years ago by James Anthony Froude. To him the outlook was gloomy enough. He did not expect any redress of ecclesiastical wrongs from the theologians of any school. Yet he faintly hoped that the people, not divines, would set themselves to emancipate religion from the chains of priestcraft, as they did in Germany in the sixteenth century. He said: "There may lie before us a future of moral progress which will rival or eclipse our material splendour; or that material splendour itself may be destined to perish in revolution. Which of these two fates lies now before us depends on the attitude of the English laity towards theological controversy in the present and the next generation." The time predicted by Froude has come, and the country is realising that the solution of the present Church problem is to come, not from the clergy, but from the enlightened laity. The solution will necessarily demand the serious thought of the profoundest minds, and will extend over a considerable period. It is not a tyro's question, nor the business of a day. Every suggested reform will meet with opposition, conflict, apparent defeat before the ultimate triumph. But of the final triumph of truth, liberty, fraternity, equality, we have no

shadow of doubt. We must take a broad view and a long perspective. With Dr. Hatch, through the troubling gloom, we seem to see, "though it be on the far horizon—the horizon beyond the fields, which either we or our children will tread—a Christianity which is not old, but new, a Christianity in which the moral and spiritual elements will again hold their place, in which men will be bound together by the bond of mutual service, which is the bond of the sons of God."

3. SPIRITUALITY SEEKS TO FREE ITSELF FROM EXTERNALISM.

The comprehensive genius of Aristotle threw considerable light upon the history of animals, but he had only a suspicion of their metamorphoses. These marvellous transformations, however, were not altogether unknown to the ancient world. The early Egyptians worshipped the Scarabæus, or sacred beetle, whose metamorphosis was regarded by them as a symbol of the transmigration of souls. The creatures which pass through this mysterious change have three distinct periods in their history. The first is the repulsive worm or ugly caterpillar; this is the larva or mask stage, the preliminary disguise of

a brilliant future livery. The second is the chrysalis or nymph stage; during this period activity ceases, life seems suspended, and the creature hides itself in a temporary sepulchre. The third is the imago or perfect stage; in this change the creature awakes from its torpor, becomes briskly animate, breaks through its outworn tenement, and displays itself all glittering with emeralds and sapphires. Is there not here a type of every living organism—individual, nation, Church—in its struggle toward perfection? There is first the infantile, initial, inchoate period of growth; a wild, uncircumscribed liberty which does not recognise legal or ecclesiastical restraints. Next there is developed a system of laws, the cocoon of a cramping externalism. In the State this may develop into a paralysing imperialism, as in ancient Rome; and in the Church it may grow into an enslaving and inane ritualism, as in mediæval and later Romanism. Then comes a movement from within, a struggle to break through external barriers, a demand for an ampler and freer life. The Revolution of 1688 may be taken as a political illustration, and the Reformation of the previous century as an ecclesiastical illustration.

As far as the Church of Rome is concerned, the

few ecclesiastical *ecdyses* that have occurred have not materially affected the general character of that Communion. The spiritual element in Romanism is almost completely entombed in the accumulation of superstition and dogma. Only those who have known Rome from the inside, and then have emerged into the freedom of Protestantism, can truly estimate the mighty chrysalis which infolds the spiritual life of that Church. The very poverty of its Christian ideas has produced an elaborate casement to attract the senses, while the conscience is silenced. In the Greek and Roman Churches, and also in the sacerdotal section of the Anglican Church, the manifestations of art, the pomp of ritual, the brilliancy of ceremony, are only splendid veils which hide the indigence of their spirituality and the inadequacy of their religious teaching. The very consciousness of their inability to satisfy the loftier cravings of the soul, and to meet the imperative demands of reason, has forced them into a system which appeals chiefly to the æsthetic taste, and quenches the aspirations of the heart. It seems almost incredible that there should be a revival of sacerdotalism within the Protestant Episcopal Church of England. It is to be explained partly by the systematic and indefatigable instruction

which the children in Anglican Sunday and Day schools have received during the past twenty-five years. A further explanation is to be found in the unparalleled commercial prosperity of the country during the same period. Mammonism and Ritualism march *pari passu* through nations and centuries. Romanism, too, in every form, is characterised by a deadly conservatism. While secular institutions incorporate the most modern methods and adapt themselves to present-day conditions, sacerdotalism "still drags slowly along in the subtle obscurity of its scholasticism. Its mediæval methods are excellently adapted to the exposition of its impossible doctrines, and to the initiation of the student into the double-shufflings of its casuistry."

But whenever and wherever the soul is stirred to seek a freer communion with God, there is a revolt of the spirit against its external boundaries. There is such a movement in France to-day. France has boastingly regarded herself the most faithful friend of the Papacy, and has contributed more money and priests to the Romish Church than any other country in the world. It is remarkable that while in England, the most Protestant nation in the world, there is a section of the Anglican Church moving towards Roman-

ism, in France, the most Romanist country under heaven, there is a movement toward Protestantism. Some of the more enlightened French priests are awakening to the fact that clericalism and ritualism are but disguised enemies of the nation and of mankind. They are discovering that where Romanism reigns there is sedition, lack of justice, insensibility of conscience, and a spirit of anarchy. While there is on the one side the priesthood and on the other the military, France is always in danger of rebellion. But a new spirit has touched many of the clergy, they are renouncing their Romish vows, and boldly accepting and teaching the Protestant faith. M. Bourrier, the leader of the Protestant ex-priests, edits a religious newspaper, *Le Chrétien Français*, the official organ of the new evangelical party, which is read by at least one thousand and five hundred Romish priests. Thus in the very stronghold of popery a revolution has begun whose consequences we cannot predict.

4. THE DEMANDS OF THE NEW AGE.

We are on the threshold of a new age. The twentieth century will witness such marvellous strides in science, philosophy, commerce, and religion, as will utterly eclipse all previous knowledge. But the Government will be upon the

people; crowned heads will be practically uncrowned; rulers will be substantially ruled; the State will exist, not for the enrichment of the few, but the prosperity of the whole; the Church will be loosed from the iron bands of the State and delivered from the despotism of the priesthood, and will afford a welcome home and comfort for weary, heartsore men. The new age will produce new men; new men will ask new questions, and will worship at new shrines. To-day Capital is king, but another king is invading, and is already ruling multitudes. Labour is the approaching king, the democracy are coming to their empire, and the change will be fraught with tremendous consequences. King Capital simply called for "hands," but King Labour calls for "heads" as well as hands. The true prophet of the times can see that both hands and heads are but instruments through which there moves an immortal soul—a soul which itself is but a ray from the Eternal Spirit who worketh all in all.

With the new age comes a twofold call. *First, there is a call for patriotism.* The decay of patriotism means the overthrow of the Empire. "This was the secret of the downfall of ancient

Rome. The Numidians were not very formidable enemies, but after a few months' conflict they destroyed half the Roman army and captured the remaining half. Meanwhile the nobles of the Empire were building palaces, inventing new dishes, and hiring cooks at unheard-of salaries. But while they neglected their country and satiated their appetites, the barbarians were at the gates of Italy.* The policy of "let us eat, drink, and be merry" is most disastrous in its results. The true patriot loves his country more than himself, and he resolutely sets his face against every encroaching enemy that threatens to destroy his altar and hearth. Popery is a subtle enemy insidiously encroaching upon our land. May the country realise its presence before it is too late! If you want to know what this enemy will do when once more it gains the ascendancy, read the history of St. Bartholomew's Day and of the Spanish Inquisition. No true Englishman can look on undisturbed at the growing power of Romanism, but he will exert himself to the utmost to crush this egregious foe, ere he find himself under the thrall of papal Rome. *Second, there is a call to Protestants.* We protest against the authority of the Church supplanting the

* Froude, *Cæsar*, ch. 4.

authority of God's Word. While Sir Henry Wotton was in Italy as ambassador of King James I., a Roman Catholic asked him, "Where was your religion to be found before Luther?" To which Sir Henry replied, "My religion was to be found *then* where yours is not to be found *now*, in the written Word of God." Protestantism is a defence of the wide-open Bible against the decrees of the Church; a defence of free access to a living Saviour against the intermediary of a priesthood. To gain this liberty our fathers fought and died. Are we to forget their labour, suffering, martyrdom? Are we to allow the work of the Reformation to be undone before our very eyes? The answer of Protestants must not be uncertain, and it must be prompt and unanimous.

III.—The Basis of the Evangelical Protestant Hope.

We must not be deceived by the blatant noise of ambitious Imperialists. Some of them may be rudely awakened to the fact that pretension is not strength, vast claims are not practical possessions, and self-interest is not solid right. If they blindly persist in their arrogant assertion of

“paramount rights,” they invite a catastrophe such as this Empire has not witnessed since the present dynasty succeeded that of the Stuarts. “It may be that the British Empire is destined to pass, as the Roman Empire passed. It seems to us a noble enthusiasm, one calculated to fire the ambition of all that is best in the youth of England, that when that time does come we may leave as a nation to the nations a heritage, not of vulgarity, not of material wealth, but of high purpose, of devotion to the uplifting of humanity, nobly attempted, and, if possible, nobly fulfilled.”

1. THERE ARE SOME GROUNDS FOR PESSIMISM.

A few leaders of modern English thought contend that the Empire and the Church have degenerated during the past thirty or forty years. Is it true that “under the frock coat, the courteous manners, and the faultless English of the citizen, you have the primary instincts of the brute”? It is painfully true that hypocrisy is rife, unreality abounds, and selfishness is supreme in many quarters. The ideal of a noble democracy is transformed into a galling plutocracy. Money, not men, rules the Empire. A deadly materialism shuts out the light of spiritual day. A paralysing Nemesis shadows the moral character, and a de-

grading mammonism blights the mercantile and political life. Enthusiasm can only be stirred by the promise of financial gain. *Auri sacra fames*. Our literature has declined in tone. A book once presented the thought of the author, now it represents a price paid; but when the author abdicates in favour of the reader there is an end of literature. The modern demand is for the short story, the problem-play, whose heroines have a past, and whose heroes come from the slums. The reek of the pot-house, the fling of the music-hall, the excitement of the exchange, the duplicity of the turf, have infected all our popular writings and doings. If the stalwart Puritan character is lacking in our political and religious life, the cause is twofold. *First*, the type of Imperialism introduced by Disraeli; an Imperialism that is determined to advance at whatever cost to right or justice, or at whatever sacrifice to weaker States. There is an Imperialism which has made, is making, and will make for the uplifting of England and humanity. The enduring Empire must have statesmen who are animated by a noble faith in humanity, citizens who will sacrifice personal gain for the general good, and a Parliament based upon the highest ethical principles. *Second*, the materialised type of religious institutions. The

Churches were never more in evidence, but vital religion was scarcely ever less effective in England. What have the Churches done to check the dangerous secularism and the aggressive sacerdotalism of modern times? Has the Church abandoned her apostolic and holy calling, and consented to become a mere abettor of insatiable Imperialism?

Mr. Frederic Harrison, the Nestor of English Comtism, uttered some scathing words about the Churches praying for the triumph of British arms in South Africa. "A Church and a creed which could chant such a requiem as this over the grave of the nineteenth century need trouble them no more. It was left henceforth to faith in humanity to do what it could to curb the passions of the strong who were thirsting to crush the weak, to preach what was the true glory of civilised man, the Gospel of Peace, which the apostate preachers of Christ had turned into a byword and had made a war cry." We do not share this conclusion entirely, yet it may awaken us to a truer sense of our national danger and ecclesiastical peril, and stir us to a clearer apprehension of our civic, religious, and imperial responsibilities and duties.

I cannot withhold another word in this connection. The echo of the war-drum has scarcely faded from our ears, and there is nothing so un-

civilising as war, especially when conducted between two so-called Christian nations. If people really perceived the moral effects of war, the clamour for blood-shedding hostilities would for ever cease. Every Empire that has been built up by the sword has gone down in blood. Not only so; every battle is a step towards moral and social degeneration. It is doubtful whether permanent good has ever accrued to any country as the result of war. Since the wars with Austria and France, Germany has declined in social stamina and moral principle. Since 1870 Rationalism has found a hot-bed in Germany, and has paralysed the Protestant Church and unevangelised the national theology. The same thing has been more or less true in England since the Crimean War. The deleterious effects of war are generally more apparent in the conquering than in the conquered people. And whether we eventually lose or gain our material object in our South African conflict with the Dutch, the consequences will be corrupting to the Cabinet and debasing to the people. It makes rulers ambitious, insincere, insensitive to human suffering, and eager for personal and imperial aggrandisement at any cost. It makes the rabble bloodthirsty, inhuman, until they shout and toss their caps in the air at the news of

each diabolical and wholesale slaughter. Perhaps the saddest phase of our recent war was the fact that the Christian Churches in England never uttered a protesting voice against the terrible human holocaust. Our religious civilisation may still be expressed in the cruel satire of Swift, "We have just enough religion to make us hate, but not enough to make us love, one another."

2. THERE ARE SIGNIFICANT SIGNS FOR OPTIMISM.

(1) *May we not discover such signs amid the clash of political and international agitations?* The Rescript of the Czar of Russia, asking the nations to assemble in conference to discuss the possibility of an arrest of the armaments which crush every civilized State, is one of the most significant and hopeful events in modern history. Although the immediate results of the Hague Conference may appear null and void of practical benefit, yet the fact of such an international conclave must leave some lasting moral effect upon the whole civilised world. It is to be regretted that England did not evince a greater enthusiasm in the objects of the Czar's humane and Christian proposal. It is also noteworthy that England has not been ready to accept arbitration in practice, which her ambassador so strenuously advocated at the Hague.

Still I hold that the Peace Conference was not in vain. Our hope for immediate international peace may be dashed to the ground, and the nations may continue to increase their armaments, but in the innermost soul of every civilised State there is an intense longing for peace. If the Jingo voice could be hushed, we should hear the voice of the enlightened conscience, which is the voice of God, calling for peace. Oh that the nations would speedily rip into shreds their battle-flags, and join in holy vow of goodwill under the banner of an eternal and Divine truce!

(2) *Further, there is a prophecy of encouragement in the truer adjustment of the individual to society.* The Progressive Party in England has consistently maintained that "a people among whom there is no habit of spontaneous action for a collective interest—who look habitually to their Government to command or prompt them in all matters of joint concern, who expect to have everything done for them, except what can be made an affair of mere habit and routine—have their faculties only half developed; their education is defective in one of its most important branches."* Nothing is more remarkable in the modern history of Eng-

* J. S. Mill, *Principles of Political Economy*, Bk. V., chap. xi., sect. 6.

land than the growing power of the democracy. The people are learning to unite for defensive and offensive operations against imperious and autocratic laws. They are combining for the protection of their children, their homes, their social and civic rights and privileges. This involves two complementary facts. *First*, the institution of the various Trade Unions have disclosed the unhealthy conditions under which multitudes labour and the galling disabilities which cramp their minds and enslave their lives. Before the crushed and over-worked multitudes united to utter their distresses in crowded garret and poisonous factory, they were unheeded by the capitalist and ruling classes. Collectivism may be pressed to a demoralising extreme, but on the whole it is a healthy reaction against the selfish individualism of the past. *Second*, the altruistic principle has strengthened with the development of society. This is manifest in the kindlier sentiments toward the ignorant and distressed. These gentler feelings "have found a vehicle for expression in that body of public opinion which, moving slowly in the past, but more quickly in our own time, has brought about the gradual political emancipation of the individual from the rule of the privileged classes." Men are realising that

they are neither isolated units, independently struggling for existence against the tyranny of their fellows, nor worthless factors, without identity, tossed to and fro in the agitated mass of humanity. Men are individuals with personal responsibilities, they are also members of society with collective rights. The more men truly respect themselves the more they will respect their fellows. The good of the individual is bound up in the good of the community, and the community can only advance by recognising the claims of the individual. Altruism has been a chief factor in the evolution of society, and to the Christian expression of this factor do we look for the development of the individual and the regeneration of the race.

(3) *Again, may we not discover hopeful indications in the retreat of advanced Biblical criticism?* The severe testing of the supernatural Book and the violent attack upon the Divinity of Christ, have shaken the faith of some and driven others into rationalism and agnosticism. But the result will be the firmer establishment of Christianity and the devouter faith of the disciples of Christ. Dr. John Watson puts it thus: "For a while the Gospel has gone into exile and ceased to have its ancient power. It is coming back again to the

throne, and the day of its tribulation will not have been lost when we welcome before we die, and our children after us, a still more generous and more convincing Gospel. It will have thrown off in adversity many false friends, in the shape of prejudice and bigotry, which did the Gospel injury in the days of its prosperity. It will have gained a wider vision and a more gracious charity in those days of foreign travel. When the Gospel once more reigns from the pulpit it will be less scholastic on doctrine and more evangelistic in spirit. It will be enshrined in a more beautiful worship and will have at its service a more varied culture. It will be free from certain offences and limitations which once hindered its appeal; it will declare a more gracious God, a more human Christ, a more hopeful message. There is no man who ought not to pray and hope for its new advent, since it will mean the re-birth of faith."

It is a significant fact that, with the growth of linguistic knowledge, the discovery of writings dating from the first centuries, and the highly developed state of textual criticism, the Protestant form of Christianity has been greatly confirmed. The Revised Version, which is as faithful a representation of the original as we are likely to get, does not lend any new support to a single

Roman or Anglo-Catholic claim. The profound investigations into the genius of the New Testament by British, American, and Continental theologians, have only emphasized more clearly the true catholicity of the Gospel, and the tentative and optional character of many ecclesiastical rites. The discovery, too, of such a writing as *The Teaching of the Apostles* has further corroborated the general principles upon which Protestantism is based. This ancient document, written probably in the early part of the second century, was published in 1883, and has important bearings upon the constitution of the early Church. It shows that the Synagogue system, rather than the Temple service, was followed in the establishment of the Christian Church. It recognises but two orders in the ministry—bishops and deacons. Its great antiquity is proved by the fact that it does not distinguish between the Agape and the Eucharist. In the Apostolic Church the Eucharist was simply the concluding act of worship at the sacred meal in which the Christians joined at the close of the day. Thus originally the social meal [*κοινωνία*, “communion”] and the ceremonial act [*εὐχάριστος*, “thankfulness”] were conjoined. They were separated about the time of Trajan’s cruelties. Both

elements survived the separation, but after about a century the Agape ceased to be observed. The Eucharist was continued, but it became more and more sacerdotal. In its extremest form we see it to-day in the sacrifice of the Mass. But *The Teaching of the Apostles* and all writings of a similar date prove the non-sacerdotal character of primitive Christianity. Protestantism hails with satisfaction all advanced study of Biblical and Patristic literature. All the evidence goes to show, if we may so express ourselves, that the New Testament and primitive Church was Protestant rather than Roman Catholic, and Presbyterian rather than Episcopal.

(4) *Once more, it is satisfactory to find that Protestantism is in complete harmony with experimental science.* The teaching of the pre-Reformation Church was based too exclusively upon the *a priori* methods of Aristotle, and the Scholasticism of the Middle Ages was too much an attempt to reduce theology to a mere logical system. In the Church of Rome there was a fear of independent investigation, lest the facts of nature should disturb the dogmas of the Church. The religious and ceremonial teaching of Roman Catholicism was founded upon tradition and superstition to a large extent. This fact explains the

opposition of that Church to scientific research. In 1633 Galileo appeared before an assembly of cardinals at Rome. He was charged with heresy because he taught that the earth moved round the sun. He was permitted to speak in his own defence. He began to demonstrate the truth of the Copernican theory of astronomy. His accusers were ignorant of science and could not understand his reasoning. At length they broke in upon him with loud cries, repeating over and over again the passage of Scripture which says that Joshua commanded the sun and moon to stand still and they obeyed him. Columbus and Descartes were bombarded with texts of Scripture and hindered in many ways by the bigotry and superstition of the Church. But Luther broke loose from these traditional chains, and started the Reformed Church upon a line of thought which should find in science not an enemy, but the friend of religion. Luther experienced, and he taught others to experience, salvation by faith, resulting in peace with God. The Church thus believing in the *experimental method* in religion, could not consistently deny that method to science. That Protestantism encourages the most thorough study of physical phenomena let Bacon, Newton, Herschell, Agassiz, Faraday,

and Bois-Raymond testify. Bishop Butler produced the first profound work on "The Analogy of Religion, Natural and Revealed, to the Constitution and Course of Nature." His object was to show that presumptively Nature and Scripture have the same source, for similar difficulties and incitements characterise both. We cannot endorse the spirit and method of argument which at different times have been manifested by theologians and scientists. But theologians are recognising more and more the value of science as an aid to faith, and scientists are according more deference and value to religion. This statement is true of the Protestant religion; it is scarcely true of Roman Catholicism. During this year (1900) the Cardinal at Westminster excommunicated the foremost Roman Catholic scientist, St. George Mivart, because his evolutionary theories were supposed to controvert the dogmas of the Romish Church. Protestantism discovers no necessary antagonism between religion and science, but regards both as *organic growths* expressive of an immanent Will, an omnipresent Spirit. With an explanation of terms Luther or Wesley might have used the language of Huxley: "The man of science has learned to believe in justification not

by faith but by verification.”* But does not faith itself bring verification? “Faith is the assurance [ὕπoστασις, “the giving substance or reality to”] of things hoped for, the proving [ἔλεγχος, “the test or verification”] of things not seen.” Revelation and Nature are both scientific; one is the science of the invisible, and the other of the visible. They are equally founded upon the ultimate Reality of things, and must consequently be fundamentally harmonious.

3. THERE IS AN ALLIANCE BETWEEN PROTESTANTISM AND PROSPERITY.

Our fellow-countrymen should know that there is a way through Canterbury direct to Rome, and England will lose power and prestige as her religion becomes Romanised. It has been shown from indisputable data that there is “one uniform connection between Romish ascendancy and national disaster, between Romish discountenance and national renown.” The nations of old have successively flourished and faded. Babylon and Carthage, Macedon and Persia, Greece and Rome, all in their turn have yielded to the law of decline. Is it of necessity uniform? Must England shrivel into inanition while “Westward the course

* *Lay Sermons*, p. 22.

of Empire takes its way"? Both the patriot's impulse and the seer's inspiration prompt the unhesitating "No." Voltaire asked: "Why has England so long and so successfully maintained her free institutions?" Not "because England is still German," as Sir James Stephen said, though that may be a very substantial ethnological and political reason, but because England is still Protestant, with a glad Gospel, an unsealed, entire, wide-open Bible. Let England preserve the sanctity of her altars and keep her religious fidelity, and she will maintain her position, and there need be no bounds to the sacred magnificence of her prosperity. For nations as for individuals that which is right is safe. A godless expediency or an unworthy compromise are certain channels to national decline. The Church and the State alike must abhor that debasing maxim of a corrupt creed, that it is lawful "to do evil that good may come."

"Do ill that good may come," so Satan spake;
Woe to the land deluded by that lie;
Woe to its rulers, for whose evil sake
The curse of God may now be hovering nigh.
Up, England, and avert it! boldly break
The spells of sorceress Rome, and cast away
Godless expedience. Say, is it wise,
Or right, or safe, for some chance gains to-day,

To dare the vengeance from to-morrow's skies ?
Be wiser thou, dear land, my native home ;
Do always good—do good that good may come.
The path of duty plain before thee lies ;
Break, break the spells of the enchantress, Rome.

II.

CONCEPTION OF THE CHURCH.

CONCEPTION OF THE CHURCH.

THE word "Church" has its own interesting history. A few writers derive the word from the Anglo-Saxon "circ," which was the name given to the stone circles used for Druidical temples, and of which the old English word "kirk" is an exact equivalent. Most authorities, however, trace the term back to a Greek origin. In that language there are two words, which have distinct meanings, but which, in their derivatives, are sometimes used interchangeably. These words are ἐκκλησία and κυριακόν; the former meaning *the called out* or *the elected*, the latter, *the Lord's House*; the one referring primarily to *the assembly*, the other to *the place* of assembly. The fact seems to be that the Romance languages derive their word for "Church" from ἐκκλησία; thus we have *eglise* in French, *eglwys*, *eglos*, and *egglis* in Celtic. The Teutonic and Scandinavian languages derive their word for "Church" from κυριακόν; thus we have *kirche* in German, *kirk* in Scottish. Both of

these words had their derivatives in early Britain. It is very interesting to mark how this Greek word "Church" came to our shores long before a knowledge of the Greek language. "The explanation is curious. While Angles, Saxons, and other tribes of the Teutonic stock were almost universally converted through contact with the Latin Church in the Western provinces of the Roman Empire, or by its missionaries, some Goths on the lower Danube had been brought at an earlier date to the knowledge of Christ by Greek missionaries from Constantinople; and this *κυριακόν*, or 'Church,' did, with certain other words pass over from the Greek to the Gothic tongue; these Goths, the first converted and the first, therefore, with a Christian vocabulary, lending the word in their turn to the other German tribes, and to our Anglo-Saxon forefathers among the rest; and by this circuit it has come round from Constantinople to us."* Thus this Christian word came to us while England was still heathen, and thus it preceded the missionaries of the Cross.

I.—The Jewish Synagogue and the Christian Ecclesia.

The use of the word "Church" in the New

* Trench, *Study of Words*, pp. 134-5.

Testament is connected with the Hebrew of the Old Testament and with the Greek of the Septuagint. "It was employed by Jews speaking the Greek language, and its meaning on their lips was coloured by Hebrew ideas. It has come from a Greek source, through a Jewish channel." There are two special terms in the Old Testament for the people of God; both mean an *assembly*, but the one means an assembly in general, and the other an assembly for Divine worship.* The Septuagint translates one term by *συναγωγή*, and the other most frequently by *ἐκκλησία*. The fundamental idea in both cases is that the congregation is called together by God Himself. In the New Testament we discover a broad distinction between *συναγωγή* and *ἐκκλησία*. The former designates the people of Israel in distinction from all other nations; the latter designates the Christian community in the midst of the Jewish people. In other words, generally speaking, wherever the word "synagogue" occurs the reference is to the Israelitish community, and wherever the word "Church" occurs the reference is to the followers of Christ. It is interesting to

* The Hebrew words are *קָהָל*, *kāhāl*, and *עֲדָה*, *‘ēdhāh*. Vide Bannerman, *Scripture Doctrine of the Church*, pp. 89-96, also Hort, *Christian Ecclesia*, pp. 4-7.

add that the word "Church" was not the first rendering of *ἐκκλησία* in the English New Testament. The Greek word was invariably translated "congregation" in the New Testament of Henry VIII.'s time. The Genevan revisers in 1557 substituted "Church" for "congregation" in most passages; but the latter term did not quite disappear with this version. It was retained in the celebrated text, Matt. xvi. 18, in the Bishops' Bible, 1568, but in this case it was supplanted by "Church" in the version of 1611—the so-called Authorised Version.

The question has sometimes been discussed whether Christ contemplated a new religious order or Church, in distinction from the old or Jewish Church. It is manifest that there was a Church before the advent of Christ, and there is no intimation that the Jewish ecclesiastical system was necessarily and entirely annulled by the introduction of Christianity. Christ came not to destroy, but to fulfil. Probably, therefore, He contemplated building His Society on ground already permeated with religion. Our Lord Himself complied with certain Jewish usages, and frequently resorted to the synagogues to teach the people. There is a sense in which the "Kingdom of God" was in the world before the

Incarnation. In every dispensation the Kingdom of God must mean the believing heart, which, as good ground, receives the seed of truth and righteousness. "Behold, the Kingdom of God is within you." Yet it is evident that Christ did found a new Society, proclaim a new Gospel, and inaugurate a Church upon new principles. In a very broad sense God has only one field: "the field is the world." Those in whose hearts the good seed finds a congenial home, and those in whose hearts the seed does not come to fruitfulness, and those in whom it is mixed with weeds, are represented in the Parables as standing upon the same field. But there is no hint of any such connection between them as membership in one Church would imply. Those whose hearts are represented by the "good ground" constitute the Kingdom of God in a special sense; they are the "Children of the Kingdom." In the Gospel Kingdom the Twelve disciples constituted a little body by themselves. Their devotion to Christ stood in boldest contrast to the indifference of the rest of the Jewish nation; they were the nucleus of the one true Catholic and Apostolic Church, of which all who accept Christ as Saviour and Lord are members.

(a) *Some Points of Likeness.*

1. THE JEWISH CONGREGATION WAS NOT A FORTUITOUS GATHERING.

The Hebrew *kāhāl* was a meeting for religious purposes. It was an assemblage of individuals bound together by the ties of kinship and religious affinity. It was a community kept together by common duties, common rights, and common privileges, for the purpose of securing a common good. In a word, it was a *Commonwealth*. The members were banded together by the ties of a common citizenship. Thus it was a type of the New Testament Church, which is a great family-circle, a Brotherhood, a religious Commonwealth. The claim of priestly supremacy is, therefore, foreign to the New Testament. All believers are equal, having equal rights, privileges, and opportunities, and all submit to one Head. "One is your Master, and all ye are brethren," comrades in trial, and partners in triumph. This fact of a spiritual Commonwealth has been sadly overlooked in the history of the Church. No impartial person can read the annals of Christendom without a sense of revulsion at the persecution of Christians by Christians. The cruelties inflicted by Roman Catholics upon those of different faiths are too horrible to be repeated in the pages of modern history. But the Vatican

will renew its policy of tyranny wherever it gains ascendancy. The hands of Protestants are not altogether clean in this matter. The Presbyterian Parliament of England became more violent for Conformity than the Court of High Commission which it had destroyed. The imposition of the Solemn League and Covenant upon all the beneficed clergy was a most intolerant violation of liberty and conscience. Perhaps the most egregious infringement of the Christian doctrine of Brotherhood is the arrogant insolence of High Anglicans towards Dissenters.

2. THE JEWISH CONGREGATION WAS A THEOCRACY.

The Hebrew Church, as well as nation, was under the government of God. The Old Testament assembly was emphatically an ecclesiastical or religious community, under the immediate sovereignty of God. The religious element was the centre of attraction and the principle of cohesion. The whole circumference of Jewish institutions had its centre in the temple service. The predominant idea was obedience to Divine laws, which were supposed to be given directly by Jehovah. New enactments were

enforced upon the congregation as the result of fresh communications from God. His presence was among the people, and His glory appeared in the temple. They were taught to look upon the Eternal as their Law-giver, Protector, and King. "The Lord is our defence, and the Holy One of Israel is our King." So the Church of the New Testament is emphatically theocratic. It has been somewhat paradoxically described as "the human kingdom of God." He is the only authoritative Ruler, and He speaks directly to His people, through His Word and by His Spirit. The New Testament Church is above all things spiritual; it does not trace its origin to any human power, and its chief regulative principle is not derived from any earthly tribunal. It owes its origin to God manifest in the flesh, and it yields supreme obedience only to the "Strong Son of God, immortal Love." This is a truth too often ignored. The Church is not a mere human institution which men may observe or despise at will. It is rather a Divine institution, whose doctrine, discipline, and Sacraments are binding upon all men. Much of the modern confusion in ecclesiastical matters arises from a false conception of the Church. It is not a despotism, nor an oligarchy, nor a plutocracy, nor a hierarchy, but a

Divine Monarchy, a Theocracy, "a kingdom which cannot be moved."

(b) Some Points of Unlikeness.

1. THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH IS NOT SO IDENTIFIED WITH THE NATION.

There was a closer relation between political and ecclesiastical affairs among the Jews than is suggested by any passages respecting the New Testament Church and the Empire. The New Testament knows nothing about a State religion or an Established Church, and there is not a word about the "Divine right" of kings or priests. This theory, revived in modern history, may be traced to the Old Testament Scriptures, where kings are called the "Lord's anointed." This idea took form when the Jews changed the theocracy into a human monarchy. The new order of kings were God's vicars on earth, to execute by civil enactments His Divine purposes. But the story of their failure occupies a large part of the Old Testament. It is a fact worth observing that neither Christ nor the Apostles ever intimate that kings reign by Divine right and independently of the people's will. The Church initiated by Christ was purely a spiritual community, having complete autonomy in matters

of doctrine and discipline. Christ taught His followers to pay all legitimate respect and obedience to the recognised civic and political authorities, but there was to be no compromise of conscience or sacrifice of religious freedom. "Render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's."

2. THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH RECOGNISES A TRUER RELIGIOUS LIBERTY.

The Jewish law may be comprehended under three classes: "*Moral laws*, or those which arise from the immutable relations existing between God and man. *Civil laws*, or those enacted for the government of civil society, adapted especially to the Jewish theocracy. *Ceremonial laws*.—These were of two kinds: first, those which were intended to keep the nation separate from other nations; and second, those which were intended to prefigure events which were to occur under the second or new dispensation." Every member of the Hebrew congregation was expected—indeed, compelled, to comply with these regulations. No Israelite was at liberty to choose his own method of worship or to formulate his own religious creed. No company of Jews could unite to establish another order of temple service without suffering

the loss of national privileges and covenanted mercies. Religion to the Hebrew was unquestioning conformity to established ritual and creed. Religion to the Christian is voluntary surrender to Christ. This is implied in the term *ἐκκλησία*, the term employed by Christ to denote His company of believing people. In its technical Greek usage *ἐκκλησία* signified the *assembly of free citizens*. Slaves, foreigners, and criminals could form no part of such an assembly. So the Christian Church is a congregation of free men. The call of the Gospel is to all men, but only those who willingly submit to the yoke of Christ become members in His Church. Membership in the New Testament Church does not depend upon compliance with certain stereotyped formulas or subscription to certain theological dogmas. There is only one essential condition: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

These points of likeness and unlikeness between the Jewish Church and the Christian Ecclesia will enable us to pass easily from the Old Testament to the New. We shall find that the Christian Church is to some extent the outgrowth of Hebrew ecclesiasticism. The principle of righteousness was taught under the Old Covenant; the plan of worship was first there revealed. From

the bosom of the Jewish Church came the Founder of the Christian Church. The first disciples of Christ received their religious education, spirit, and hope in the synagogues of the Jews. Notwithstanding these connections there remain ineffaceable contrasts. The Hebrew Church was founded on one family, and continued in it to the end; the Christian Church is founded on personal relations with Christ, and is open to every creature. The former had an elaborate system of sacrifices; the latter has but one Sacrifice, offered once for all. The qualification for admission to the Jewish Church was Jewish birth; the qualification for admission to the Christian Church is new-birth. "Except a man be born anew (*ἀνωθεν*='from above'), he cannot see the Kingdom of God."

II.—The Idea and Use of the Word "Church" in the New Testament.

1. THE CONNOTATION OF THE TERM WHEN IT CAME INTO THE NEW TESTAMENT.

The word *κυριακόν*—*that which belongs to a lord*, had a considerable history before it passed into Christian terminology. In classic Greek it was often employed to denote State or fiscal

property, and was nearly synonymous with τὸ βασιλικόν—*royal* or *kingly*. It always meant a possession of a tangible character owned by a superior person. When the word was adopted by Christian writers it retained its original sense, only heightened. Sacred things, times, and places were the κυριακοί—*possessions of the Lord Christ*. The word κυριακόν (κυρίου οἶκος) means literally *the house of the Lord*. But, since the early Church did not always possess a house or building, it is evident this was not the chief word used by the New Testament writers to denote the company of believers. The more frequent word, as we have already seen, was ἐκκλησία, which played a conspicuous part in Greek life before the Christian era. It was the common term for the assembly of selected persons in the public affairs of a free State; the body of free citizens summoned together by a herald (κῆρυξ). The persons constituting these assemblies would therefore be the *elect* (ἐκκληῆται—*the called*). When this term was adopted by Christ and the Apostles it retained its root meaning. Believers in Christ were the *elect*, a company of free agents, authoritatively summoned from amongst the mass of sin-bound slaves and “aliens from the commonwealth of Israel.” These constitute the spiritual Israel, the commu-

nity of Christ's people, united in work and worship as citizens of the Kingdom of Heaven. "But ye are an elect (ἐκλεκτόν) race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession."

2. THE WORD "KINGDOM" IN RELATION TO THE CHURCH.

(1) *The term "Kingdom" sometimes means the theocratic nation—the Messiah's earthly reign.*—The word is Jewish in its connections and suggestions. To the Hebrews it signified the reign of God among men through the Messiah-King, and the triumph of the chosen people over all nations of the earth. At the time of Christ's advent the Jewish people were still supported by this national hope. The non-realisation of this idea was one of the chief grounds of the conflict between our Lord and the Jews. Compare the plaintive language of the disciples on the road to Emmaus: "We hoped that it was He which should redeem Israel," with their interrogation on the day of Ascension: "Lord, dost Thou at this time restore the Kingdom to Israel?" Here the term "Kingdom" is used according to the politico-theocratic idea of the national Messiah

and is very comprehensive. Undoubtedly the Messiah's Kingdom bears an intimate relation to the entire range of human history, and no phase of life is outside that Kingdom taken in its broadest theocratic sense.

(2) *The term "Kingdom of Heaven" usually means the "visible Church."*—We can always tell where the visible, organised Church exists. Its numbers may be counted, its members named, its work tabulated, and its history written. The visible Church is composed of all who outwardly and nominally adhere to the Christian profession. These are good and bad, tares and wheat, and they cannot be thoroughly separated until the harvest, which is the end of the world. The visible Church is organised and governed by representative men, who seek the guidance and power of "the Head, even Christ." It is most interesting and important to notice that the authority delegated to Peter and other disciples had respect to the visible Church. "I will give unto thee the keys of the *Kingdom of Heaven*." Our interpretation of this passage may be expressed in the paraphrase: "I give unto thee the power of admitting to, or excluding from, the membership of that Society on earth whose members profess faith in Christ." This is a power which every

branch of the Christian Church claims and exercises.

(3) *The term "Kingdom of God" most frequently means the "invisible Church."*—The invisible Church consists of all those who inwardly and truly are the people of God. We cannot localise this Church, count its numbers, schedule its work, or write its history. The Kingdom of God was among men before the Incarnation. The Baptist heralded the new visible Church: "Repent ye, for the *Kingdom of Heaven* is at hand." Christ proclaimed the same fact: "Repent, for the *Kingdom of Heaven* is at hand." Our Lord unquestionably referred to the invisible Church in the passage: "The *Kingdom of God* cometh not with observation; neither shall men say, Lo, here! or there! for lo, the *Kingdom of God* is within you." The terms "Kingdom of Heaven" and "Kingdom of God" are not therefore synonymous; some may be found in the former who are not in the latter. The Reformers made the theological distinction between the visible and the invisible Church. Their object was not to lessen the importance of the visible or deny the reality of the invisible, but to enhance the necessity, unity, and continuity of both through their one constructive factor—the will of God. They are complementary terms,

each necessary to the other, and both to the complete expression of so rich and complex an idea as the Church of Christ.*

(4) *The term "Kingdom" occasionally refers to the triumphant state of the people of God.*—Sometimes the word "heaven" is employed to indicate the invisible abode of God. We read that Christ "descended out of heaven." We speak of the faithful dead as departed to heaven. This beatific state is the consummation of the invisible Church, the eternal condition of the Kingdom of God. "The seventh angel sounded, and there followed great voices in heaven, and they said, The Kingdom of the world is become [the Kingdom] of our Lord, and of His Christ."

(5) *The distinction of the "Kingdom" and the "Church."*—Prof. Findlay says, "The Church is related to the Kingdom as the electorate of our country to the British Empire."† According to the view advanced above, this statement of Prof. Findlay is exegetically inaccurate. "The Church" is a more comprehensive term than either the "Kingdom of Heaven" or the "Kingdom of God," inasmuch as it includes both the

* For the distinctions made in these sections *vide* Edgar, *The Genius of Protestantism*, pp. 117, 118.

† *The Church of Christ*, p. 15.

visible and invisible Church. The Church of Christ has two sides, material and formal. In its material and constructive aspect the Church is synonymous with the "Kingdom of Heaven"; in its formal and ideal aspect it is synonymous with the "Kingdom of God." The invisible Church is within the visible, but not commensurable with it; so the visible Church is within the State, but not commensurable with it. It would be as unreasonable to call the inhabitants of a country an army, because they heard the call to arms, as to call all who hear but do not obey the Gospel, the Church. The army consists of those who actually enrol themselves as soldiers; and the Church consists of those who actually repent and believe, in obedience to the call of the Gospel. The Church is a company of brothers and partakers "in the tribulation and kingdom and patience which are in Jesus."

3. THE TWO CHIEF SENSES IN WHICH THE TERM IS EMPLOYED.

(1) *To denote the whole community of believers throughout the world—the Universal Church.*—In this sense the word is used by our Lord in the memorable passage: "I will build my Church"

(Matt. xvi. 18); by St. Paul: "He is the Head of the Body, the Church" (Col. i. 18); in the Epistle to the Hebrews: "To the general assembly and Church of the firstborn" (xii. 23). In the Epistle to the Ephesians, *ἐκκλησία* denotes exclusively the entire Church. The members of the Catholic Church have an inward and real unity, but from manifold circumstances this unity may not be able to find visible expression. "They may be widely scattered, unseen, and unknown in great part to each other, as the hidden seven thousand in Israel were to Elijah. But they can never cease to be an *ἐκκλησία*, truly one in Christ their Lord, and seen to be so in the eyes of God, His Father and their Father, His God and their God." It is evident that no one branch of the visible Church can claim to be the Church Catholic. Catholicity is not a question of arithmetic, it cannot be settled by numerical preponderance, or by vote of Synod or Convocation. Unless a Church claims to contain the whole of Christ's people, without exception, it cannot claim to be Catholic. Hence the inconsistency of those who pray for "the good estate of the Catholic Church," and at the same time refuse the right hand of fellowship to tens of thousands who are members of the Body of Christ. The General Church (*ἡ καθολικὴ ἐκκλησία*) is broader

than the section which calls itself "National," and broader than the section which assumes the name "Catholic." The Church of Christ consists of "all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord."

(2) *To denote a single and local congregation.*—In this sense the term is most frequently used in the New Testament. It is sometimes the Church of a town: "The Church of God which is at Corinth" (2 Cor. i. 1); sometimes it is the Church in a house: "The Church in thy house" (Philemon 2). When the congregations of a district or country are referred to, the plural is used: "The Churches of Macedonia" (2 Cor. viii. 1); "The seven Churches which are in Asia" (Rev. i. 4). The local Church is an epitome of the universal Church, with an outward and visible unity, more or less complete, according to circumstances. Cremer says: "The application of the word (*ἐκκλησία*) to the Church universal is primary, and that to an individual Church secondary." The noteworthy fact is that "although even in the largest towns the Christian community is always spoken of as one Church, the Christian community in a province is never so called." Whenever, therefore, in modern ecclesiastical terminology the singular "Church" is employed to denote all the

Christian congregations in any country, it is solely on the grounds of expediency, accommodation, and public utility. The terms, "Church of England," "Presbyterian Church of Scotland," "Methodist Episcopal Church of America," are not in strict harmony with New Testament usage. "From the very circumstances of the case there could be no such thing as a 'National Church' in the Apostolic period. National Churches, however justifiable and desirable in certain periods of national life, are not Divine or Apostolic institutions." No ecclesiastical lineage, or mutual association with other Christian communities, can add one iota to the Scriptural basis, validity, and authority of the local Church. Neither Episcopal government nor connexional polity are essential to the *esse* of a Church.

4. THE CHIEF METAPHORS SETTING FORTH THE MANIFOLD PHASES OF THE CHURCH.

The New Testament conception of the Church is set forth in a number of metaphors: (1) "*The Flock of God.*" This intimates that the members are living individuals. They need the protection of a Shepherd and the strength of association. So intimately united are the Flock and the

Shepherd that to leave the former is to leave the latter. (2) "*The Olive Tree.*" The metaphor of a tree implies that the life is developed from within. Stalagmites increase by the addition of carbonate of lime on their outsides; trees grow and bear fruit by their own inherent vitality. Of the Church-tree Christ is root and stem; to be severed from Him means death. Compare the instructive teaching respecting the "vine" in John xv. (3) "*The Bride*" of Christ. This shows that the Church is the object of Christ's love, affianced to Him for time and eternity. Any wrong done to the Bride is an insult to the Bridegroom. He protects, sustains, honours, and will finally exalt His espoused Church to endless felicity. (4) *The "Holy Temple."* The idea is that of many units bound together in mutually helpful fellowship. Christ is Builder, Foundation, and Corner-stone. The Temple is the home of the King. "I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will be their God." The governing characteristic of the Temple is purity. "For the Temple of God is holy, which Temple ye are." (5) "*The Body*" of Christ. This metaphor shows that the many organs and functions of the body contribute to the general good. Christ is the Head, and therefore a vital part of the Body. The Head

cannot dispense with the lowest member of the Body. The Head cannot say to the feet, "I have no need of you." The members of the one spiritual Body must move in obedience to the Head, and in mutual edification and love. "Ye are the Body of Christ, and severally members thereof."* These are the principal metaphors employed to set forth the various aspects of the Church in the New Testament. The difficulty of stating in a sentence the New Testament conception of the Church will be obvious. From a local society the Church develops into a universal Brotherhood. "It is the totality of those who have accepted the salvation which is in Christ, and who are living in mutual love as children of God. It is filled with the Holy Spirit, which is the Spirit of Jesus, and it is this which is the bond of union among its members."† The Church is one because its Spirit is one.

5. THE CONCEPTION OF CHURCH MEMBERSHIP.

(1) *The New Testament Church did not contemplate unattached Christians.*—The Christian end

* *καὶ μέλη ἐκ μέρους.* Luther expresses the essential meaning: "Each one according to his part." Cf. Meyer on 1 Cor. xii. 27.

† Denney, *Studies in Theology*, pp. 186-7.

cannot be reached "except by the mutual action and reaction, the reciprocal giving and receiving, of all who are in fellowship with Christ." Such fellowship was inculcated in Apostolic times. Many of the primitive Christians' meetings were not so much regular and formal acts of worship, but rather improvised and spontaneous expressions of spiritual life. Of this nature probably were the meetings mentioned by Pliny in his letter to Trajan: "The Christians affirmed that it was their custom to meet on a stated day before sunrise and sing a hymn to Christ as to a God." These companies of believers, like the old prophets, were under an afflatus of the Holy Spirit, and were carried along (*φερόμενοι*) with rapturous psalmody. "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your heart unto God." It is evident that the important functions of "teaching" and "admonishing" were laid upon each individual believer. Literally *διδάσκοντες καὶ νουθετοῦντες ἑαυτοὺς* means "teaching and reminding yourselves." It is this mutual and informal, spontaneous and direct fellowship, as contrasted with general and official, stereotyped and dogmatic worship, which is essen-

tial to the spiritual increase and edification of believers, and the preservation and extension of an uncorrupt Church. Upon this high ground of ecclesiastical expediency and spiritual necessity the New Testament justifies the duty and privilege of Church-membership.

(2) *Fellowship, or the Communion of Saints, is a sine quâ non of spiritual growth.*—We have no sympathy with the Romish Confessional, but there is a principle involved which has given Romanism a history and a power unknown to any other Church. That Rome has abused the Confessional we must admit, but in avoiding the errors of Romanism we must not ignore the truth at the basis of that system. Probably the Reformers were at fault in this respect. In the sixteenth century there was such a reaction against papal dominion that the good and the bad in the Church of Rome were alike thrust aside. The Romish Confessional provided a relief-channel for the burdened soul. The Reformed Church of England failed to provide a vent and refuge for anxious spirits and affrighted consciences, and thus ignored a vital element in human nature. This omission in the organisation of the Episcopal Church accounts in a large measure for the religious indifference and ecclesiastical corruption

which characterised England in the eighteenth century. The Methodist Revival, by re-establishing the primitive type of fellowship, saved English Christianity from sinking hopelessly into a lifeless form. The Oxford Movement did much to revive the languishing life of the Established Church by introducing, in a modified form, the old lever, the Confessional. The Tractarians recognised the need for direct spiritual dealing with the souls of men. Their method may be questionable, but the principle is vital. Human spirits crave for personal direction and help, and this is found in the fellowship of the Christian Church. The unity of the Church depends upon the recognition of this truth, and in this sense the Latin dogma is true—*extra ecclesiam, nulla salus*.

(3) *Church-membership is contingent upon certain conditions.*—Here it will be necessary to keep in mind the distinction between the visible and the invisible Church. *a.* Christ alone can fix the terms of admission into the fellowship of His spiritual Body. These terms according to the Gospels were brief and simple. Christ demanded two things, first, belief in Himself as the Messiah, and second, willingness to obey His commandments. “Come unto Me,” and “Follow thou Me,”

were the two expressions in which Christ summed up the terms of discipleship. Whenever in the heart and life of a candidate Christ found these conditions, he was forthwith received into the company of believers. These terms of discipleship were embodied in the Apostolic words, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." The principle involved in these words was invariably acted upon by those who were "faithful brethren in Christ." The terms of salvation are synonymous with the terms of admission into the Body of Christ. Salvation is union with Christ. Whatever is done *for* a man before he accepts Christ, whatever is done *in* him at the moment he believes on Christ, and whatever is done *through* him after his regeneration, derives all its virtue from his relation to Christ. To remain in the fellowship of the true Catholic Church is to abide in Christ. "Abide in Me, and I in you."

β. Terms of admission into the visible Church are decided by the company of believers. Into the invisible Church Christ admits only the faithful; into the visible Church, the unfaithful are sometimes admitted. Judas and Simon were formal members of the Christian Society, after they ceased to be members of Christ's spiritual Body. Hence

membership in the visible Church is not synonymous with membership in the invisible Church, and consequently the terms of membership are not absolutely the same. In the one case the judge, the company of believers, is fallible, and in the other case, the Judge, Christ, is infallible. No branch of the Christian Church attempts to add new terms of admission into the spiritual Body of Christ. But for prudential reasons all sections of Christendom have rules and regulations, more or less clearly defined, for admission into their respective memberships. This authority, as we have seen, was entrusted to the company of believers by Christ in His words to Peter, "I will give unto thee the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven." At the same time no Church should make compulsory the acceptance of any doctrine or discipline, unless it is convinced that non-acceptance would violate the teaching of Scripture or imperil the salvation of the soul. Except, therefore, in very exclusive Churches, whose narrowness amounts to the sin of bigotry, doctrinal and disciplinary tests are not sharply defined and dogmatically enforced. The general acceptance of the cardinal doctrines, and the general compliance with the characteristic discipline of a Church (it being understood that personal character har-

monises with the profession of faith), should be sufficient for formal membership.

III.—The Evangelical Protestant (or Free Church) View of the Church.

The day ought to have passed long ago for the necessity of defending the ecclesiastical status of Nonconformists. But they are still virulently attacked by some who might be more consistently employed in defending the validity of their own branch of the Church of Christ. An Anglican clergyman writes: "The Catholic Church is the home of the Holy Ghost. It is His only earthly home. He does not make His home in any Dissenting sect. Sometimes people quarrel with the Church, and break away from her, and make little sham churches of their own. We call these people Dissenters, and their sham churches sects. The Holy Ghost does not abide—does not dwell—with them. He goes and visits them, perhaps, but only as a stranger."* This language could only be uttered by a Liliputian ecclesiarch, or an incorrigible bigot, or a purblind fanatic, or an ethical conjurer, or a mental delinquent—a baptized, confirmed, and ordained *non compos mentis*.

* Quoted in Walsh's *Secret History of the Oxford Movement*, p. 410.

In opposition to the Romish sentiment just quoted, Free Churchmen hold as an axiomatic principle that religion does not exist for the Church, but the Church exists for religion. Religion is not synonymous with the Church; the former may exist independently of the latter. Religion began with the creation of the human race; the Church began with organised society. In this case the logic is valid: *post hoc, ergo propter hoc*. Religion is the creative factor, the Church is the created fact; and the created is true in so far as it corresponds with and exhibits the creative. The work of the Church is to instruct men in the truth and help them to reach the religious ideal. The Church that most effectually does this is the most valid, authoritative, and Divine. The Nonconformist axiom here is this: "The Churches exist by the religion, and for it; the religion does not exist because of the Churches, or for them."*

1. THE NONCONFORMIST CLAIM IS OFTEN MIS-REPRESENTED.

No Nonconformist communion assumes to be *the* Church. There is but ONE CHURCH. Christ

* Fairbairn, *Catholicism: Roman and Anglican*, pp. 32-40.

is not divided, nor yet His "one flock," which, however, may be sheltered in a number and variety of folds. Belief in the Catholic Church is compatible with belief in manifold local, provincial, or national Churches, each having complete autonomy in ecclesiastical government. The points which divide Christendom into sects are all foreign to the New Testament. Any claim based upon tradition, or decrees of Councils, or patristic literature, must not be accepted as Divinely authoritative, or parallel with the explicit teaching of the New Testament. Nonconformity makes no claim which is not justified by the ministry of Christ and the writings of His Apostles. Moreover, it makes no claim for itself which it denies to other bodies of Christians. It claims to be an integral part of the universal Church, holding the one Head, and seeking to subdue the rebellious world to the law of Christ. All external phases of the Church are questions of expediency. The Church as a visible organism cannot fail to be influenced and largely fashioned by its environment. The justification for particular forms of Church life is to be found in the course of Christian history. Between every new development and the preceding state of the Church there is a natural transition link. "Each link in the series

carries with it its own justification, if it is found to be a natural and inevitable result of historical circumstances, a modification of an institution or a usage which was forced upon a community by the needs of a particular time." *

2. THE CHURCH IS NOT AN END IN ITSELF.

From the teaching in certain quarters it would appear that Christ's chief purpose in coming into the world was to establish an ecclesiastical institution, and that His only care through the subsequent centuries has been the perfecting of that institution after a particular pattern. No teaching is more delusive. The paramount fact to remember is that Christ came to "seek and to save that which was lost." Whatever institution He inaugurated or sanctioned was intended only as a means to that end. The Sacraments are not ends in themselves; they are but channels through which God blesses the believing heart. So the Church. It is the organised agency through which God will communicate His saving purpose to men; the ordained instrument for bringing in the Kingdom of Righteousness. And the aim of the whole Church should be the aim of each branch

* Cf. Hatch, *Growth of Church Institutions*, pp. 5, 6.

and each member of it. Now the *end* is much more important than the means, and our Lord sanctions any means that accomplishes the right end. The Apostles, until they were rebuked, were inclined to be exclusive: "Master, we saw one casting out devils in Thy name, and he followeth not with us; and we forbade him, because he followed not us." The disciples did not understand, (1) that one might follow Christ though not with a particular sect, (2) that one might work miracles though separated from a particular organisation. Ecclesiastics should be careful lest by an excess of zeal for external unity they hinder that equally Divine agency, outside their own communion, which tends to the enlargement of the Church and the advancement of truth. But did our Lord approve of the Apostles' conduct? He immediately rebuked their unChristian bigotry. Jesus said: "Forbid him not, for there is no man which shall do a miracle in My name that can lightly speak evil of Me. For he that is not against us is on our part." Let sacerdotalists solemnly ponder these words. Our Lord approved, not only the work, but the method of this man: (1) Because he was a believer in Christ; what he did was in Christ's name, not his own or that of a religious sect; (2) because difference of visible

communion is unimportant. The chief point is, he "is on our part"; he had his own reasons for not joining the company of the disciples—reasons which Christ deemed sufficient; (3) because he was doing the same work as the Twelve—in the same Name and quite as effectually—"casting out devils." Here we see clearly that the means, the agency, the organisation, the institution, are all points of minor import; the end, the object, the spirit, are all-important. If Christians meet in the *same end* it matters nothing whether they follow in the *same way*. This Scripture unmistakably supports those who contend that the real and final test of a valid Church is *fruit*. Apply any other test and you ignore the very *raison d'être* of the Church. Alike of individual believers and communities of Christians, "By their fruits ye shall know them."

3. DIVISIONS ARE INEVITABLE AND BENEFICIAL.

Christianity is a life, and life manifests itself in new forms. Every reformation, resulting in division, has been the outworking of forces which nothing could check. At first Luther had no intention of inaugurating a new Church, but he could not refrain from proclaiming a Gospel which

made him free. Soon the necessities of the position forced him and his co-reformers to organise the new Christian community growing up around them. In this way the Protestant Churches of Germany originated. The old Romish Church, with tremendous ecclesiastical and political power, rejected the doctrines of Luther, and persecuted his followers. Other causes led to a great division of the Church in England. Henry VIII. flung aside the authority of the Pope, and appointed bishops who would support his schemes. When Elizabeth came to the throne she removed all the bishops, save one, who yielded to her views. This violent imperial compulsion resulted in a great separation from the historic Church of the West. The Protestant Church of England, while claiming a sort of lineal continuity with the older Church, was nevertheless broken off from it by the arbitrary ruling of Henry and Elizabeth. The Protestant Episcopal Church became as intolerant as the Romish. By the Act of Uniformity a large number of beneficed pastors were compelled to abandon their livings or take a solemn oath which was repugnant to their consciences. To their immortal honour, be it said, they were true to themselves and to their God. This was the origin of Nonconformist Churches in England.

At the beginning of his work Wesley had no idea of founding a new Church, and to the end of his life he urged his followers to remain, if possible, within the Anglican fold. But the converts of the Wesleys owed nothing to the State Church, and in that Church they failed to find the spiritual food they needed. The Church of England was not comprehensive enough to take the "societies," with their religious excrescences, into its communion. And the followers of Wesley, finding the Established Church cold, and happy among themselves, started upon an independent career. This was the origin of the Methodist Church. Every one of these separations has been followed by immense blessing, and no one can study history without discovering the imprimatur of God upon them all. The Lutheran revolt against papal despotism has been of incalculable advantage to Germany and the whole Continent. The Protestant Reformation in England has been of immense gain to the country and the whole world. The Non-conformist revolt against Episcopal intolerance has been of inestimable blessing to all nations of the earth. The Methodist Revival has been the mighty stimulus to all the Churches of the land, and its influence has gone out to the ends of the earth. The spiritual blessings attending these

separate Churches prove that they are not separated from Christ, "just as the spiritual life of the Anglican Church proves that separation from the historic Church of the West has not placed it outside the Covenant of God."*

4. ORGANIC UNION, HOWEVER DESIRABLE, IS NOT ESSENTIAL.

Romanists and Anglican Ritualists, in emphasizing the claims of visible order, draw an unwarrantable inference respecting the visible Church. They contend that the true idea of the Church is one communion in outward embodiment as well as in essential inward character. This is truly ideal, but is it essential? Where is the New Testament proof? Or, if proof be forthcoming, which of the many visible Communion can claim to be the one true embodiment of Christ's Church? It is certain that neither the Roman Catholic nor the Episcopalian Churches can claim New Testament authority or precedent for their particular type of Church form and government. Nor can any other Church make this claim. The Primitive Church polity was

* Beet, *Comm. on Eph.*, &c., p. 398. See the whole Dissertation.

flexible and necessarily incomplete; it was to shape itself with the developing needs of the Living Organism. "The outward forms of the Apostolic Churches are as unfit for present needs as are the clothes of childhood to a full-grown man." It is idle to deplore the existence of "discrepant and competing organisations." Before we can materially alter this state of things we must change human nature. While the world is so imperfect and while opinions are so divergent, to attempt organic union would be unwise or even disastrous. The manifold divisions of the great army of God have been providentially raised up and commissioned to take some special part in the Christian conquest of the world. "Different Churches embody different types of Christian life; and the types thus embodied are a lesson and an enrichment to the whole. This manifest gain reveals the hand of God even in the divisions of the one Church of Christ. These divisions, caused or made needful by man's imperfection and sin, are God's own mode of purifying and perfecting His Church and thus leading it to a higher unity."

The plea of Episcopalians that Nonconformists should abandon their distinctive organisations and join the Established Church of England fails in

two points. (1) First, the Anglican Church is in a state of schism; let her first heal her own breaches before seeking the inclusion of Nonconformists. There are, at least, three distinct parties in that Church—the High, the Broad, and the Low. Which party are Nonconformists to join? If they join the High Church party they must accept Apostolical succession and sacramental efficacy. If they join the Broad Church party, they must abandon all definite theology and all distinctions between faith and unbelief, and between the Church and the world. If they join the Low Church party they must reconcile their Evangelical Calvinism or Arminianism, as the case may be, with the Book of Common Prayer, which is semi-Protestant and quasi-Romish. Let the Church of England present a united front before she attempts to unite others. (2) Second, if there must be union, the larger should absorb the smaller. Nonconformity has a much more widespread and vastly more numerous Communion of Churches, and an immensely greater number of adherents, than the Anglican Church can muster in all its sections and correlatives. As a world-wide power, Nonconformity is much more potent in its manifold operations and in its civilising and evangelising enterprises.

For the Anglican Church to absorb Nonconformity—the lesser to assimilate the greater—would be a portentous ecclesiastical anomaly.*

5. THE UNIVERSAL PRESENCE OF CHRIST.

This is the charter of Christian liberty; the benediction of Christ is not contingent upon any institution, however ancient or sacred. Wherever believing hearts join in sincere worship, there is Christ. And He is as fully present with the few who may meet outside the boundary of the visible Church as with the multitude worshipping in a cathedral. The “covenanted mercies” are not dependent upon Church government, nor are they communicated through an exclusive ecclesiastical agency. The promises of God are to individuals, or communities who unite to do His will. “If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of My Father which is in heaven.” Why? Because they are members of a so-called historic Church? Because they subscribe to certain creeds, and submit to certain discipline? Because they acknowledge a three-fold order in the

* *Vide Rigg, The Churchmanship of John Wesley, p. 116.*

ministry, and credit the dogma of Apostolical succession? The New Testament does not say so. "For where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them." St. Ignatius uttered the great truth in the oft-quoted words: *ubi Christus, ibi ecclesia*. I am aware that the expression of Ignatius has been twisted by High Anglicans. In attempting to interpret this Father we should remember this canon: Ignatius leaned toward the Episcopal form of Church government, but he was in no sense a sacerdotalist. It may not be fair to separate the words quoted from their context, but whether regarded as an independent sentence, or a dependent clause, or a concluding sequence, the case is not materially changed. His reference in the context to the Bishop must not be interpreted in any mediæval sense; no ritualistic notion was present in the mind of Ignatius. What he says about the Bishop in the congregation may be said in the same manner and with equal truth of any modern Presbyter in the Church. The allusion has no sacerdotal significance; it is a question of order and discipline only. On the whole, we may fairly accept this summing up: "The expression is an absolute statement, entirely independent of the precise significance

of the context. I take my stand beside St. Ignatius. I declare that whatever be my taste, my prejudice, my preference, my foregone conclusion—wherever Christ is, there is the Catholic Church. Wherever and whenever Jesus Christ blesses and prospers Christian organisations as such, He is in the midst of them, He sanctions them.”*

He who founded the Church will sustain and complete it. In the Cathedral of Florence are two fine statues of the architects. Arnolfo, who commenced the Church, is looking down as if examining the foundations; Brunelleschi, who finished the structure, holds a plan of the cupola on his knee, and is looking up at the completion of his design. In the Christian Church there is only one Architect, who is both “author and finisher.” He founded His Church upon the rock of personal confession of faith in His Divine nature and mission, “and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.” He is constructing His temple in the consecrated hearts of believers, not through any official priesthood, but through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit: “Ye are a temple of God, and the Spirit of God dwelleth in

* Rev. Hugh Price Hughes, M.A., *Methodist Times*, Sept. 21, 1899.

you." He will complete the spiritual structure in the New Jerusalem, and His redeemed and sanctified people shall behold Him upon His throne, "and serve Him day and night in His temple, and He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them."

III.

THE DOCTRINE OF ORDERS.

THE DOCTRINE OF ORDERS.

IN all writings of a controversial nature it is important to bear in mind two things. *First*, in attacking a system we do not attack persons. We have the highest respect for many Romanists and Anglicans; their character is unblemished, their learning profound, their friendship an education and a blessing. But this personal appreciation must not close our eyes to the evils of the religious systems with which these estimable men are connected. Nor do we for a moment deny them the right to think for themselves; a liberty, however, which many of them deny to us. We willingly grant the same freedom of opinion to others as we claim for ourselves. The difficulty is to get the generality of people to think for themselves. If they would only do this honestly and intelligently sacerdotalism with all its pretensions would be immediately doomed. *Second*, it is not enough merely to deny dogma. One assumption is not disproved by making another. Destructive

criticism, however acute, is always unsatisfactory. To remove old foundations will avail nothing, unless we can establish new. Negative assertions are always weak and defective when they stand alone. We want a constructive argument based upon Scripture, history, and reason. Without such a positive statement of doctrine the Free Church view of Christianity—the Church, the ministry, and the Sacraments—can never be successfully imprinted upon the mind.

I.—The Scriptural Doctrine of the Ministry.

1. THE JEWISH PRIESTHOOD.

Modern criticism is casting something more than doubt upon the validity of the Jewish priesthood. But this point is too technical to detain us here, and it does not materially affect our conclusion. No fact is becoming more apparent than the deadly struggle between “priest” and “prophet” all through the Old Testament. There was never a great crisis in the history of Israel when these parties were not at each other’s throats. Isaiah and Amos stand out in grand antagonism to the corrupting practices of the priests. “Your new moons and your appointed feasts My soul hateth”; “though ye offer Me

burnt offerings and your meat offerings, I will not accept them." The writer of the fortieth and fifty-first Psalms makes the clear distinction between worthless external gifts and the offering of the penitent heart to God. "Thou desirest not sacrifice, else would I give it; Thou delightest not in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise." The Old Testament is pervaded with denunciations of the arrogant assumptions of the priests and their abominable treachery and immorality. Everywhere the people are enjoined to turn from them and consecrate themselves to the living God. Spiritual worship in the Old Testament has no necessary connection with the priesthood. "Spiritual prophecy in the hands of Amos and Isaiah, and their successors, has no such alliance with the sanctuary and its ritual. It develops and enforces its own doctrine of the intercourse of Jehovah with Israel, and the conditions of His grace, *without assigning the slightest value to priests and sacrifices.*" *

2. CHRIST'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE JEWISH PRIESTHOOD.

It is sometimes said that Christ admitted the

* Robertson Smith, *The Old Test. in the Jewish Church*, Ch. x.

“succession” of the Jewish priest-order. The one passage adduced in support of this contention is the saying of our Lord: “The Scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat.”* Plainly our Lord does not blame the Scribes and Pharisees for instructing the people in the law and the prophets in so far as these exhibited the mind of God. Moreover the Old Testament Scriptures were written mostly in pure Hebrew, and this language had fallen into disuse in Palestine in the days of Christ. It was, therefore, needful that some persons should translate and expound it to the people. Strictly speaking there is here no reference to the priesthood as such; the Scribes are referred to as prophets rather than priests in the passage we have quoted. Christ said in effect: “Whatsoever things the Scribes and Pharisees inculcate upon you, when they translate to you the words of the Book of God, and whatsoever things they prove in their teaching to be agreeable to the mind of God, as made known in His Book—all these things do.”† But even if our Lord seems to affirm the principle of succession among the

* Matt. xxiii. 2—ἐκάθισαν = “have seated themselves.” There is doubtless “an allusion to the pretentious and self-seeking character of the Pharisees.”—Meyer, *Comm. in loc.*

† Matt. xxiii. 3.—Morison, *in loc.*

Scribes, He immediately forbids any such claim to authority in His Church. "But be ye not called Rabbi, for One is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren." Obviously there is no analogy between the function of these scribe-teachers instructing the people in the Law, and that of ritual-priests administering sacraments which are regarded as necessary or supremely important for salvation.

In the teaching of Christ there is no place for the ministering priest. He had no sympathy with the priestcraft, He never defended the order of priests, but from first to last He stood in direct opposition to the whole hierarchical order. "One thing in His teaching is most remarkable—the complete absence of sacerdotal ideas, the non-recognition of those elements and customs men had been wont to think essential to religion. He spoke of Himself as a Teacher, never as a Priest; assumed no priestly office, performed no priestly function, breathed an atmosphere that had no sacerdotal odour, that was full only of the largest and most fragrant humanity. He instituted no sacerdotal office or rite, appointed no man to any sacerdotal duty. . . His ideal stood in so sharp an antithesis to that of the priest and the scribe, that He was unintelligible to both; was regarded

and treated by both as an absolute enemy.”* Further, the whole sacrificial system of Israel, like the law of which it was a part, was fulfilled, and so ended, in Christ. The sacrifices of the law were “a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things.” When the reality, which the law foreshadowed, actually appeared among men, the shadow for ever vanished. If, therefore, we still seek righteousness through a sacrificial system, we nullify the grace of God; for “if righteousness came by the law, then Christ died in vain.” Any analogy drawn between the Levitical priesthood and Romish or High Anglican orders can have no significance whatever. The system of human intermediaries between God and man has been for ever abolished. “There is one God, one Mediator also between God and men, Himself Man, Christ Jesus.”

3. TYPICAL ILLUSTRATIONS.

To maintain their theory of orders Sacerdotalists necessarily affirm two propositions, viz., that Episcopal ordination is a pre-essential of a valid ministry, and that immorality and heresy on the part of the priest do not invalidate his

* Fairbairn, *Catholicism : Roman and Anglican*, pp. 29, 24-5.

ministry. Both these propositions are directly contradicted by two significant New Testament cases.

(1) *The Case of the Apostle Paul.*—That Paul was ordained at Antioch by the imposition of hands is an undeniable fact. The instance is most suggestive, and we invite attention to the following analysis. *a.* There was a direct mandate from heaven for this ordination or “separation” (*ἀφορίσατε*), hence it had a special significance. Calvin, with whom Professor Stokes agrees,* suggested that this ordination was necessary to meet the prejudices of the Jewish Christians against the Gentiles. Paul had spent much time among his fellow-Jews, now he would turn, with full earnestness, to the Gentile world. To prove that God had ordained and sanctioned this new missionary departure, the Holy Ghost said, “Separate me Barnabas and Saul.” This special consecration to the new work would do much to silence all Jewish critics, who, notwithstanding their profession of Christianity, had no sympathy with the conversion of the Gentile world. *β.* Those who laid hands on Paul were unordained themselves. Who were Niger, Lucius, and Manaen? Not priests, but “prophets and teachers.” Moreover, the act of

* Stokes, *Expos. Bib. Acts*, Vol. ii., pp. 190-5.

ordination was the act of the *whole Church* ;* the formal rite of the imposition of hands was by the *office-bearers* of the Church. The *authority* to send forth ministers, under the Divine Spirit, is vested in the whole Church ; the *act* of ordination, for prudential reasons, is assigned to the presbyters. “ The good men who ordained St. Paul were themselves unordained, and their action differed in degree, not at all in principle, from that of a number of pious men who are the heads of a congregation of people gathered somewhere in the name of the Lord, and who, being guided by the Holy Ghost to recognise the gifts of some one for the ministry, should ordain him to the office.” It is quite evident that, according to Ritualists, Paul’s ordination was not valid, and yet he would be a bold man who would thrust the Apostle out of the succession. γ. The Apostle attached no special importance to his human or ecclesiastical ordination. His position was that every man called and qualified by Christ was an Apostle, whether recognised by the Church or not. There are Apostles who have been ordained by the Church, there are Apostles who have not been so ordained, and there are those ordained by the Church who are not Apostles.

* Acts xiii. 1: *κατὰ τὴν οὐσαν ἐκκλησίαν* = “ with the existing Church.”

“Paul was quite distinct and clear. He said: I do not deny that St. Peter and St. James are Apostles, but I also insist I am as much an Apostle; they can give me nothing that I cannot give to them; I am independent of them, and I stand on the basis of my relation to Jesus Christ, as fully ordained an Apostle as any one of them, though I have been independent of them, and my ministry is parallel with theirs. Who called me? Not Peter, but Christ. Who gave me my work to do? Not Peter, but Christ. Who ordained and established me in my office? Not Peter, but Christ.” The example and teaching of Paul are unanswerable arguments against the sacerdotal theory of ordination. “Paul an Apostle (not from men, neither through men, but through Jesus Christ, and God the Father).” δ. Paul set the work of the prophet far above that of the priest. In fact, the priest has no place in the ministry of the Apostle, nor in the teaching of the New Testament. The ultimate tests of every ministry are *character* and *results*. Paul’s great appeal was to the number of converts he had made by the Cross. It is of no use for a man to present sealed documents to show that at a particular time, in a particular place, by a particular person, through a particular method, he was validly ordained. At the bar of human

reason he will be asked what life he has led, what sacrifices he has made, what disciples he has gained for his Master. "I am become all things to all men, that I may by all means save some." It is not by any sacramental shibboleth that men are saved, but by the preaching of the Gospel. "Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel: not in wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made void."

(2) *The Case of the Apostle Judas.*—It is affirmed by Ritualists that Christ knew, when He chose Judas into the Apostleship, that he would betray Him, that after the betrayal Judas was still reckoned one of the Twelve, and that he did Apostolic work to the last. We contend that the facts do not support this theory, and we appeal to the New Testament and to reason. *a.* That Christ knew who should betray Him is nothing to the purpose. Our Lord's omniscience does not interfere with the freedom of the human will or with personal character. However unworthy Judas proved, he was doubtless sincere when he was called to the Apostleship. Such is the fallibility of human nature, that the most devout disciple of Christ to-day may be an utter apostate a few years hence. That Christ should choose Judas, who, He knew, would prove a traitor, is no more

puzzling than that He should call into His Church many in every age who ultimately fail in their Divine mission. Both the call and the fall of Judas may be shrouded in mystery, but the mystery is a poor basis for the heinous dogma we here rebut.

β. Judas was not a "devil" and an Apostle at the same time. The contrary view is maintained by sacerdotalists; but the theory is repugnant to common-sense and to the spirit of Christianity. The Eleven may have regarded Judas as one of their number after his secret hypocrisy in covenanting with the priests; his innermost heart was closed to them. But as seen by Christ, Judas had already fallen, he was devil-possessed before the deed of betrayal. "Did not I choose you the Twelve, and one of you is a devil." When the devil entered into Judas, he at that moment fell from the Apostleship. When he lost his character he forfeited his office. Christ looks at the hearts of men, and He will not sanction the works of those who secretly deny Him. Who has courage enough to assert that Judas, after the betrayal, could celebrate a valid Sacrament? I have entirely misread the New Testament if it be true that Christ is so wholly indifferent to moral character.

γ. Judas fell from the Apostolate through sin. Ritualists must hold that the valid ministry of

Judas remained to the end, that it was only terminated by suicide. The New Testament shows that it was not death, but *sin* which put an end to his ministry. That there was no formal expulsion of Judas from the Apostleship by Christ or by the Eleven is of no importance; there was no necessity for any such overt act. Two things are made clear by Luke in the Acts—that the gap in the number of the Twelve was *caused by sin*, and that it was *filled on the ground of spirituality*. “Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, show of these two the one whom Thou hast chosen to take the place in this ministry and Apostleship, from which Judas fell away, that he might go to his own place.”*

4. NEW TESTAMENT TERMINOLOGY.

It is too late in the day and quite unnecessary to prove that the three orders of the ministry find no support in the technical language of the New Testament. It is certain that the terms *πρεσβυτέρος* and *ἐπισκόπος* (“elder” and “bishop”) are interchangeable terms; the former having Jewish associations and the latter Hellenic. In Acts

* The Greek is simply ἀφ’ ἧς παρέβη, *away from which he passed over*. The causal element is rightly expressed by the Text. Recp.—“by transgression.”

xx. 17, Paul is said to have summoned to Miletus the "elders" (*πρεσβυτέρους*) of the Ephesian Church. Yet, addressing them immediately after, in verse 28, he appeals to them as "bishops" (*ἐπισκόπους*), whose duty it was "to feed the Church of God."* When these words were introduced into the New Testament they brought with them no priestly significance. The Jewish priest as such was not designated *πρεσβυτέρος*, nor was the pagan priest termed *ἐπισκόπος*. Neither word would of necessity have suggested to Jew or Greek any sacerdotal function whatever. The official term for the priest was *ἱερεύς*, a word nowhere in the New Testament applied to an officer in the Christian Church. If this term had been employed, its import would not only have been religious, but distinctly sacerdotal. The conclusion, therefore, is apparent: a definite, technical, acknowledged priestly term is declined by every New Testament writer and finds its substitute in terms which contain no priestly element whatever. In the employment of official and distinguishing names Christ and the Apostles

* *πρεσβύτερος* and *ἐπισκόπος* denote one office; the former term denotes the *dignity*, and the latter the *duties* of the office. *πρέσβυς* = old. More frequently the comparative is used: *πρεσβύτερος* = older. The word is clearly so employed in Acts xv. 23, *οἱ πρεσβύτεροι* = "the elder brethren."

were most consistent. "The people the Apostles represent and address, the society they describe, may have in its collective being a priestly character, but is without an official priesthood. It has 'apostles,' 'prophets,' 'overseers' or 'bishops,' 'elders,' 'pastors,' 'teachers,' 'ministers' or 'deacons,' 'evangelists'; but it has no 'priests,' and no man, or body of men, who bear the name, hold the place, exercise the functions, or fulfil the duties of the priest or the priesthood as they were known in ancient religions."*

5. THE TWO ORDERS OF THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH.

These are the Presbyteriate and the Diaconate. Both orders grew out of the Apostolic office, which at first embraced the functions of the diaconate (*διακονία τῶν τραπεζῶν*), as well as the functions of the presbyteriate (*διακονία τοῦ λόγου*). "Christ chose Apostles only, and left them to divide their labour under the guidance of His Spirit, with proper regard to times and circumstances, and to found such additional offices in the Church as were useful and necessary."

(1) *The Presbyteriate*.—We have freely admitted the religious equality of all believers, the priest-

* Fairbairn, *Christ in Modern Theol.*, p. 49.

hood of all Christians. We would, however, guard against any ultra-democratical theory respecting the position and functions of the ministry. After His resurrection Christ gave special "commandments" to the Apostles, "being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God." In virtue of their commission from Christ, the Apostles exercised the power of making laws and constitutions for the government of the Church; of enforcing these laws with such penalties as the case required; of ejecting the incorrigible from the communion of saints; of choosing proper persons to fill sacred offices; and of electing their successors to rule in the Church, and to administer its Sacraments. The Apostles undoubtedly possessed powers of a miraculous nature which they could not transmit to their successors. Outside the Apostolic Twelve, St. Paul was the most remarkable presbyter, ruling the Churches with unquestionable authority. He claimed the right of decreeing "ordinances" for the regulation of the Asiatic Churches, and claimed for these Apostolic *decreta* the force and validity of Divine precepts: "Take knowledge of the things which I write unto you, that they are the commandments of the Lord." It is evident that Paul in all his

Epistles and labours wrote and acted "as one having authority," and not submissively deferring every question to the popular voice. The position of Timothy and Titus was along the same Pauline plane. Timothy was empowered to make regulations for the orderly conduct of worship; to guard the purity of doctrines taught in the Church; to ordain qualified men for the ministry; to maintain Church offices; to publicly rebuke transgressors, and to excommunicate the incorrigible. Titus was authorised to "ordain elders" in the cities of Crete, and to "set in order" the whole administration of those Churches; to "exhort and rebuke with all authority," and to "refuse (*παραιτοῦ*) the heretical after a first and second admonition." The function of the Presbyteriate is two-fold: To "feed the flock of God" (*ποιμάνετε*), and to take "the oversight thereof" (*ἐπισκοποῦντες*). The duties involved may be summarised thus: *α*, the Apostles, and afterwards the elders, were the ultimate judges of ministerial qualifications; *β*, they formally appointed their fellow-labourers and ordained their successors; *γ*, they maintained the Word of God, and preached its saving verities; *δ*, they administered the holy Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper; *ε*, they officially admitted into, and excluded from, the fellowship of the

Church; ζ, they were the under-shepherds, Christ being the Chief Shepherd.

(2) *The Diaconate*.—Like the eldership, the office of deacons had a precedent in the Jewish synagogue, but in the Christian Church it grew out of an emergency in the congregation at Jerusalem. The institution of this order is recorded in Acts vi. The points to be distinguished are: *α*. No spiritual function whatever was conferred with the appointment of the deacons; *β*, the duties of this office were distinctly contrasted with those of the Apostles; *γ*, the approval of the “seven” was with “the whole multitude”; the ordination by the imposition of the Apostles’ hands; *δ*, the special functions of the diaconate were financial; *ε*, the purpose of this order was to relieve the Apostles of the temporal affairs of the Church, that they might devote themselves wholly to its spiritual interests. “Then the Twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not fit that we should forsake the word of God, and serve tables. Look ye out therefore, brethren, from among you seven men of good report, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will continue stedfastly in prayer and in the ministry of the Word.” It appears, however, that early in the

primitive Church deacons undertook some of the duties of the higher office. Philip and Stephen, who were among the original "seven," preached and baptized. In fact, the diaconate served as a novitiate to the higher functions of the ministry. All deacons did not become presbyters, but those only who possessed the essential qualifications—the *aptness* and the *ability to teach* (διδασκτικον, ικανοι και διδαξαι). That the Apostolic Church at Jerusalem resorted to this expedient of ordaining deacons shows the elasticity of the primitive organisation. The only order instituted by Christ was the Apostleship, which is continued in the presbyterio-episcopate; the only order instituted by the Apostles was the diaconate, which is perpetuated in the lay-elders, deacons, or stewards of the modern Church. The office and function of deacons are differently interpreted in the Episcopal, Presbyterian, and Congregational types of ecclesiastical administration. In the Anglican Church deacons are permitted to perform any of the sacred offices except pronouncing the absolution and consecrating the elements of the Lord's Supper. In the Presbyterian Church the deacons care for the poor, and minister in many ways to the necessities of the congregation. But frequently their duties are performed by the elders,

called ruling elders.* In Congregational Churches the deacons take the place of the ruling elders in the Presbyterian Church. In the Episcopal Church there are three orders and three offices—bishops, priests, and deacons. In the Presbyterian Church there are two orders—ministers and elders, and three offices—presbyters, ruling elders, and deacons. In Independent Churches there is one order—presbyters, and two offices—pastors and deacons.

II.—The Sacerdotal Doctrine of the Ministry.

There are certain elements in human nature which seem permanent, and are passed on from generation to generation. External phases often change, but underlying principles remain the same. Hence the maxim, “history repeats itself”; hence, too, the Church has to confront, from time to time, old evils in new garbs.

1. THE TENDENCY TO CHECK REFORMATION.

During the second half of the seventeenth century there was a great revival in the Church

* By the foremost Presbyterian writers the distinction between the teaching and the ruling eldership is little more than an expedient for convenience. The principle of identity is conceded.—*Vide Rigg, Church Organisations, pp. 130-1.*

of Rome. The chief mover of that revival was Molinos, a priest, and also a prophet. He secured the attention of the cardinals and gained the ear of the Pope. At length he made a bold request, which Innocent XI. granted. "Let devout persons," he said, "receive the body and blood of Christ without confession to a priest." But what did this really involve? It meant an indifference to the externals of religion, an ignoring of ecclesiastical authority, and a subtraction from the occupation of the priests. Then the Jesuits—the ablest, most subtle and dangerous sect the world has ever known—discovered an affinity to the Reformation. They began the attack, they approached the Pope, they pointed out the danger. Come to the Sacrament without confession! Come to Christ without a priest! What will become of the priests? Very soon Molinos found himself in prison, his property confiscated, and his friends incarcerated. He died in the dungeons of the Inquisition in Rome, 1697.

The Tractarians repeated in England the principles of the Jesuits in Rome. During the early part of the nineteenth century a friendly relation existed between the Established Church of England and the Protestant Churches on the Continent. This is clear from the writings of many

Anglican divines, and also from the manner in which Episcopalians selected their missionaries from Continental Churches without re-ordination. Against all this a movement was inaugurated about 1833 by John Henry Newman. He was joined by a few others, and the effects of the "Oxford Movement" are apparent in the disorganised condition of the Anglican Church to-day. In asserting that Episcopacy is an absolutely essential condition of Christ's Church, the Tractarians imagined they would promptly and effectually silence the Low Church party and all Dissenters.

2. THE SACERDOTAL CLAIM.

It is contended that without the Episcopal succession faith is nothing, the Sacraments are invalid, and those who seek Christ through any other channel are aliens from the inheritance of grace and are left to the uncovenanted mercies of God. To show that this is not an exaggerated statement of the case the following quotations from Church dignitaries are given. "An uninterrupted series of valid ordinations has carried down the Apostolical succession in our Churches to the present day. There is not a bishop, priest,

or deacon among us who cannot, if he please, trace his own spiritual descent from St. Peter or St. Paul.”* Another says: “The bishops of the Church of England are by unbroken succession the descendants and representatives of the original Twelve.”† Another says: “The gift of the Spirit is dependent on the laying on of Apostolic hands, and therefore can exist in its covenanted fulness only where the Apostolic organisation abides.” Another: “Those who are in this succession alone have the Holy Ghost to dispense in Baptism, to impart in confirmation and in ordination.”‡ Another: “The Apostles had the power to transmit the ministry.”§ We might think that the strong common-sense of the English people would have repudiated these preposterous claims and spewed them out into the abyss where the spirits of evil fatten on the dregs of human folly. But alas! multitudes do not apprehend the tendency and issue of these atrocious assumptions. Their least evil is that they “unchurch” other Christian communions. The advocates of these theories speak of the Lutheran Church as the “Lutheran Communion,” they call the Scotch Church “the Kirk,” and they evade recognising Methodism as

* Dr. Hook. † Late Bp. of Oxford. ‡ Bp. Potter.
§ Canon Liddon.

a Church by calling it the "Wesleyan Body." Such ecclesiastical squeamishness might make us smile, but the degrading evils, which absurdities of this sort produce, must turn our smile into a groan. The natural and inevitable goal of such dogmas is Rome. There was no *via media* for Manning and Newman, nor can there be for any of their disciples. The effect of the Tractarian movement is to Romanise the Anglican Church. Indeed, this is the avowed object of the "English Church Union" and other semi-secret societies. But there is something more fatal than union with Rome. It is a subordination of the spiritual to the material, an obstinate and defiant intrusion of the priest into the place of Christ. It is a theory of the Sacraments which is debasingly magical; the magician-priest, irrespective of character, administers a valid ministry. We are back again in the days of Innocent III.—"Whoever returned from the heretical parties to the bosom of the Church was required to declare that he recognised the celebration of Sacraments by sinful priests."

3. THE VALUE OF THE SACERDOTAL CLAIM.

(1) *The Proof Adduced.*—It is only natural to ask for evidence of the lofty and exclusive claims

of Ritualists. The majority—let us hope chiefly neophytes—who profess these dogmas have gone through no laborious research in investigating the grounds of their priestly claims. Nothing less than absolute necessity, nothing less than the plainest and most irrefragable testimony of Scripture, should induce a believer in Christ to admit such doctrines into his mind. But where are the proofs? Where are the texts? They cannot produce one which, unless it be grossly twisted, lends the slightest support to their position. They will refer to some half-dozen verses of Scripture which they have found garbled in some obscure ecclesiastical manual; but, rightly interpreted, these verses have no reference to the dogmas assumed; their use in such a connection simply attests the ignorance of those who cite them for such a purpose. To these misquoted texts of Scripture must be added a few extracts from the Fathers, culled without any critical discrimination as to context or purpose. This is practically the whole basis upon which Episcopacy and its attendant theories are built, but to found doctrines of such momentous consequence upon such a flimsy basis is unreasonable. It is just here that High Anglicans, taught by Newman, fail. Reason is denied its proper function in

their teaching; at best it is only an instrument to be trusted "in particular acts." Conscience is the authoritative guide, and is to be implicitly obeyed. Thus, however unreasonable teaching may be, if the conscience can be reconciled to it, it must be accepted and followed, though it involves the absurdest dogmas and practices. There is nothing that tends so much to destroy all respect for the clergy as the demand for belief in the incredible, and the claim for more than can be due to them. Two things have effectually thrown contempt upon a regular succession of the ministry. First, the calling of no succession regular but what was interrupted; and, second, the making of the salvation of Christians depend upon that interrupted succession. Of the historical lineage the most learned men have the least assurance, and the unlearned can have no notion but through ignorance and credulity.

(2) *The Broken Chain.*—Probably more than a hundred thousand persons have exercised the functions of bishops since the close of the first century. It is quite certain that many of these were not in the so-called Apostolical Succession. It is very questionable whether any minister in the Anglican Church can trace his spiritual genealogy back farther than the Norman con-

quest. There are many centuries so shrouded in moral darkness that the transmission of orders cannot be traced through them. Extreme obscurity hangs over the government of the Church during the Middle Ages; one fact is apparent, the Church was exceedingly ill-regulated. Sees were openly sold, transferred by popular tumult, bestowed by profligate women on their paramours, conferred by warlike barons on stripling kinsfolk. There were bishops ten years old, five years old; some popes were mere boys, whose stupid dissoluteness rivalled that of Caligula. How any man can feel confident in resting his claim to Apostolic validity upon such a basis, is a triumph of ecclesiastical credulity. We are asked first to assume that Peter was the first Bishop of Rome. We have yet to learn that Peter ever saw Rome, or ever had anything to do with the Christian Church there. The first link is unsound, what of the second? Tertullian says that Clement was Peter's successor; Irenæus and Augustine affirm that Linus succeeded Peter. But Bishop Pearson shows that Linus died before Peter, consequently he could not succeed him. The third link is confusion worse confounded. Irenæus says that Anacletus was the third from Peter; Tertullian says that Linus was the third; Augus-

tine places Clement third from Peter. Romish writers generally put the name of Cletus third in the list of bishops, thus making a distinction between Cletus and Anacletus. They venerate two separate saints on two separate days, one of whom never had a real existence; for Bishop Pearson shows that Cletus is simply an abbreviation of Anacletus. Similar confusion accompanies the succession of Romish orders down through the Dark Ages. Indeed, the Apostolic claim in the English Sees of Canterbury and York contains some very uncertain and questionable links. It is not without significance that the great ecclesiastical historian, Eusebius, in the fourth century endeavoured to complete the chain of bishops from his own day back to the Apostles. But the task was hopeless, and he confessed that he felt like one attempting a desert and untrodden path, and that he was utterly unable to find even the bare traces of those who had gone before him. This was the testimony of Eusebius, who lived in the fourth century, when we might imagine the enterprise was not one of insuperable difficulty. Yet we find a bishop of the Anglican Church, who lived in the nineteenth century, declaring that his pedigree and that of his ministerial *confrères* was quite clear and unbroken right up to the Apostles.

III.—The Free Church Doctrine of the Ministry.

The comicality of the Anglican claim to Apostolic succession cannot fail to strike all students of the subject. There are two orders of Churches—(1) the Episcopal or so-called Catholic, including the Greek, Roman, and Anglican Churches; (2) the Reformed or Free Churches, including those of the Presbyterian and Congregational type. Now the ordination of a minister in a Free Church is recognised as valid by all Churches of this order; but the ordination of an Anglican clergyman is repudiated by every other Church of that order. If there be anything in the historical succession, the Greek and Roman Churches are the undeniable possessors; the Anglican Church has no valid claim. The abject manner in which English Churchmen stand at the door of the Vatican, pleading for recognition, is quite unworthy of the ancient and honoured Church of England. The absolute and unequivocal pronouncement of the Pontifical See of the invalidity and nullity of Anglican orders, while it is the sport of ecclesiastical critics, should silence the absurd pretensions of that Church. The Free Church theory of orders does not require us to question the validity of any ministry, or to un-

church any community of believers. The grace of orders is not bestowed *horizontally* through human hands, but *perpendicularly* from the Holy Ghost. The Scriptural doctrine of the "real presence" teaches us to find Christ, not alone in the Sacraments, but wherever sincere hearts are gathered for worship.

1. RÉSUMÉ OF FREE CHURCH TEACHING.

In contrasting the Evangelical doctrine with the Ritualistic theory, it will be convenient to present the two aspects of the position: (1) Negative aspect. The Free Churches deny that the Church of Christ exists only in one form of ecclesiastical polity; that ministers are "priests" in another sense than that in which all believers are "a royal priesthood"; that the Lord's Table is an altar on which the oblation of the Body and Blood of Christ is offered anew to the Father; that the presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper is a presence in the elements of bread and wine; that regeneration is inseparably connected with Baptism; and that Episcopacy is essential to the *esse* of the Church. (2) Positive aspect. The Free Churches assert that the Holy Scriptures are the sole rule of faith and practice; that Baptism and the Lord's Supper are of Divine institution and

commemorative Sacraments; that there are but two orders in the ministry, the Presbyteriate and the Diaconate; that Episcopacy is not an order but an office, ancient and, under some conditions, probably desirable; that the use of liturgies, extempore prayers, and the method of administering the Sacraments are discretionary; that the Church exists for religion, not religion for the Church, and therefore its policy may be abridged, enlarged, and amended, as may seem from age to age most conducive to the edification of the people.

2. HISTORY CONTRADICTS DOGMA.

Very few will have the audacity to say with Cardinal Manning, "If history contradicts dogma, so much the worse for history." We prefer another arrangement of the terms: If dogma contradicts history, so much the worse for dogma. The protasis of this sentence is not difficult to prove. Sacerdotalism rests upon a twofold assumption—(1) That Christ established His Church upon the Episcopal basis; (2) That this basis is eternally unchangeable. Having assumed these premisses, the conclusion is logical enough, viz., that Episcopacy is essential to the *esse* of the Church. This being granted, the dogma of Apostolical succession becomes the test of a valid

ministry and Church, and all historical facts are ruthlessly ignored in the maintenance of the speculative theory. Two considerations may be adduced in opposition to the sacerdotal position.

(1) *The Conclusions of Bishop Lightfoot.*—As a whole, nothing has yet superseded in cogency and exactness Lightfoot's *Dissertation on the Christian Ministry*. There have been a few feeble attempts to modify his profound historical findings, but his main conclusions are absolutely impregnable. Lightfoot shows the antiquity of the Episcopal form of Church government, that it was firmly established in the second century, and that Cyprian was "the first champion of undisguised sacerdotalism." Behind this we cannot go upon any documentary evidence. "It is clear that at the close of the Apostolic age the two lower orders of the threefold ministry were fairly and widely established; but traces of the third and highest order, the Episcopate properly so called, are few and indistinct."* The conclusion is that while Episcopacy can claim great antiquity, it cannot claim Apostolic precedent. It was a natural growth in polity, keeping pace with the religious demands of the Church. Originally the bishop was a "fellow-presbyter"; the modern

* Lightfoot, *The Christian Ministry* (Comm. on Phil.), p. 195.

sacerdotal claims are traceable to gross perversions of ecclesiastical offices. But even if we admit—what no unbiassed student can admit—that the Apostles established the Episcopal government of the Church, it by no means follows that the Episcopalian system was final, or the only system Christ would sanction and bless. The absence of finality is one of the most characteristic features of the Apostolic Church. Christ introduced a living organism which was to be developed according to environment of time and place.

(2) *The effects of Sacerdotalism on national life.*—The pretensions of some High Anglicans, that the Church of England can claim a historical succession independently of the Romish Communion, are hopelessly hollow. There is abundant evidence to show that up to the time of the Reformation the English Church acknowledged the supreme authority of the Pope, accepted the canon law of the Vatican, and sanctioned appeals to Pontifical courts. With the Reformation, under Henry VIII. and Elizabeth, came a separation, a complete renouncement of Papal authority. The Romish Church rightly viewed the position, denounced the Anglican schismatics, and consistently refused their claims to Catholic validity. But this dis-

ruption of the Church was the true salvation of England. What if this country had remained in league with Rome and under the supremacy of the Pope? Look at Spain and France, and you see most striking object-lessons. Those who demand the Roman hierarchy in the Church must be prepared for Roman corruption and impotence in the State. I put these questions to high Episcopalers: (1) If the sacerdotal theory of the Church is the only one divinely sanctioned, how is it that the most sacerdotal countries are the most degraded, or despised, or godless? (2) If the theory of the Church held by Protestant Free Churchmen must be relegated to the "uncovenanted mercies of God," how is it that those countries, where this theory is most triumphant, are most advanced in culture and power?

3. ORDINATION DOES NOT CREATE GRACE.

This is a point of great importance; indeed, the whole argument hinges upon this. Nonconformists believe in ordination as consistently and practise it as regularly as Romanists and Episcopalians. But the two views of the nature and virtue of ordination are totally different. Ritualists maintain that in ordination the candidate receives Divine grace, unction, and authority which he did

not previously possess. Nonconformists hold that ordination simply recognises, and sets apart for definite work, gifts and graces already possessed. This position is clearly corroborated by the Acts of the Apostles and throughout the New Testament. The ordinations in Acts vi. and xiii. were entirely on the ground of qualifications. The "seven" were ordained after they were recognised as "full of faith and the Holy Ghost." Respecting Timothy's ordination, we venture to point out that the "gift" (*χάρισμα*, 1 Tim. iv. 14) was given "by prophecy," not *by* "the laying on of the hands of the presbytery."* By "prophecy" we understand "the qualification which justified the ordination." The undeniable principle of the New Testament in respect to ordination is this: "a recognition by the human actors of a call already made and a qualification already imparted." The method of ordination is of quite minor importance. In the New Testament it was usually "by the laying on of hands." According to Dr. Hort and Prof. Ramsay the laying on of hands was most likely by the whole company of believers,

* διὰ προφητείας μετὰ ἐπιθέσεως τῶν χειρῶν τοῦ πρεσβυτερίου = *by means of prophecy along with the laying on of hands of the presbytery.* The *προφητεία* occasioned the ordination, and must be regarded as the means through which the *χάρισμα* was given to Timothy by the Holy Spirit. Cf. 1 Cor. xii. 4.

whether the act was performed by their representatives or actually by all the members. If this view be correct, it greatly diminishes the *officialism* of New Testament orders. It is probable that during the period immediately following the Apostles the act of the imposition of hands did not always accompany the act of ordination. In the days of Cyprian there is no mention of the laying on of hands. This is the more remarkable since Cyprian was the first distinguished leader of sacerdotalism. Two conclusions are deducible from this position: (1) There have been periods when, apparently, the rite of imposition of hands has been omitted, and yet the ministry continued; (2) The act of laying on of hands was not always regarded as an essential function in the continuity of the Apostolical succession. Nonconformists ordain their ministers, not to convey tactually a gift, but for orderliness in administration. Ordination does not make a man's ministry valid; it simply recognises its validity. If the Church had better understood the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, much sacerdotalism would have been impossible. The theology of the third Person is a department of sacred science in which the Church is yet lamentably weak. The rites and Sacraments of the Church are not to be observed

in order to receive the Holy Spirit, but because the Holy Spirit has been received. Men are not ordained in order to be spiritually qualified for the ministry, but because they are already spiritually qualified. The Spirit anticipates the action of the Church, the Church recognises the Spirit's presence. No passage in the New Testament, rightly interpreted, affirms that the Holy Spirit was bestowed *ab initio* and *solely* by the imposition of hands.* But that a specific blessing accompanied the laying on of the Apostles' hands there is no reason to doubt.

4. WESLEY'S VIEW OF ORDINATION.

High Anglicans, in their statements respecting orders, often refer to the position of John Wesley. It is somewhat singular that Episcopal writers spend so much time in attempting to prove that Wesley was a Ritualist, and that his followers, if they were true to the will of their founder, should join the Established Church. This weak and illogical argument has only created in Wesleyans an intenser respect for their human founder, and a more tenacious love for their Divinely-established communion.

* On the oft-quoted passage, Acts viii. 18, see the suggestive remarks of Slater, *Methodism in the Light of the Early Church*, p. 90.

(1) *Wesley's earlier and later position.*—It cannot be too frequently pointed out that in his early life Wesley was a High Churchman, and that he uttered language quite in harmony with the sacerdotalism then prevalent in the Established Church. He was a firm believer in Episcopacy, but “his views of the *jus divinum* were those of Cranmer and the first Reformers, rather than those promulgated by Bancroft in the latter part of the sixteenth century.” In his later life Wesley completely changed his views respecting valid ordinations and Sacraments. It is obviously unfair to quote his early and immature opinions, and utterly ignore his later and sounder judgment. That Wesley at first regarded his assistants as laymen and forbade them to administer the Sacraments is freely admitted. Such duties, he maintained, belonged to those who held a “commission so to do from those bishops whom we apprehend to be in a succession from the Apostles.” In 1746 Wesley read Lord King’s *Account of the Primitive Church*, and he wrote: “In spite of the vehement prejudice of my education, I was ready to believe that this was a fair and impartial draft; but if so, it would follow that bishops and presbyters are (essentially) of one order, and that originally every Christian congregation was a Church inde-

pendent of all others." If bishops and presbyters are the same order, it follows they have the same right to ordain. This right Wesley, as a presbyter, began to exercise in 1784. Writing the same year to his brother Charles, he said: "I firmly believe I am a Scriptural ἐπίσκοπος as much as any man in England, or in Europe; for the uninterrupted succession I know to be a fable, which no man ever did or can prove."*

(2) *Ordinations after Wesley.*—For forty-five years after Wesley's death his followers did not ordain by imposition of hands. It is almost unaccountable that this primitive and Scriptural practice should have been so long neglected. It was so, however, until the Conference of 1836, when the following resolution was adopted: "The Conference, after mature deliberation, resolves, that the preachers who are this year to be publicly admitted into full connexion, shall be ordained by imposition of hands; that this shall be our standing rule and usage in future years; and that any rule of a contrary nature which may be in existence, shall be, and is hereby, rescinded." The *Form* of ordaining candidates in the Wesleyan Church is based upon the *Form and Manner of Ordering of Priests* in the Established Church of

* Works, Vol. xiii., pp. 218, 220.

England. In its Wesleyan guise, however, that *Form* is thoroughly Protestantised. It is simple, impressive, and Scriptural. It is, however, only a *form*; it is neither the indispensable nor the exclusive mode of ordination.

IV.

CHURCH GOVERNMENT.

CHURCH GOVERNMENT.

THE sagacious Stillingfleet said: "All the laws occurring in Scripture respecting Church government may be referred to these three heads: such as set down the qualifications of the persons for the office of government; such as require a right management of their office; and such as lay down rules for the management of their office." We do not expect to find in the New Testament *details* of Church polity such as were given for the guidance of the Jewish Church, but *general laws* or *principles*, the application of which is left to circumstances of time and place. Every institution, civil or religious, must be under some kind of government. The Christian Church is an institution, a visible Society, and necessarily implies government for its permanent existence. In addition to this argument, which finds its strength in the nature of things, there is a government of the Church by *Divine right*, sufficiently affirmed by Scripture precedents. The

one debatable question is the particular *form* of government and its special *modes* of administration.

I.—Types of Ecclesiastical Polity.

There are three great systems of ecclesiastical polity—Episcopal, Presbyterian, and Congregational Independency. The New Testament does not directly enjoin either, but allows each. The method of Church rule could not be stereotyped during the inchoate stages of its growth. The *form* of ecclesiastical administration in any age must depend upon the state of civilisation and religion, and these depend upon the development of thought and spirit. There are doubtless certain permanent elements underlying the evolution of the Church, but those phases which are subject to the law of development must constantly change their expression. The doctrine of evolution is strikingly illustrated in the history of Church government. The chronological order of the three types of ecclesiastical administration, in what we may term the modern Church, is that given above—Episcopal, Presbyterian, and Congregational Independency. But, going back to primitive Christianity, we find the order reversed, and this is the order in which we shall briefly

characterise them, because it is more consonant with the natural law of development.

1. CONGREGATIONALISM.

This was probably the form of the primitive Churches. But it was early superseded by the creation of certain offices, and the appointment of certain officials to whom the administration of Church affairs was entrusted. Still later the Presbyteriate was superseded by the Episcopate. Modern Congregational Independency has been described as an "arrested growth." It was formally organised in England by Robert Browne about the year 1580. Browne first attempted to reform the Church of England in some of the parishes. He visited Norwich, declaring that, if reformation were impossible, "every true Christian was to leave such parishes, and to seek the Church of God wheresoever." Here his principles were fully developed, and here he founded a Congregational Church. Congregationalism, like Methodism, was at first a reaction from the vain inventions, abominable idolatries, and spiritual inanition of the Established Church. "The distinguishing principles of English Congregationalism are: 1. That Jesus Christ is the only Head of the Church, and that the Word of God is its only

statute-book. 2. That visible Churches are distinct assemblies of godly men gathered out of the world for purely religious purposes, and not to be confounded with the world. 3. That these separate Churches have full power to choose their own officers, and to maintain discipline. 4. That, in respect of their internal management, they are each independent of all other Churches, and equally independent of State control." The ruling principle is decentralisation of power; the type of government is republican; the final court of appeal is democratic. It is as if all the Christian world were summoned together, while both Episcopacy and Presbyterianism are alike abolished, and a voice from the sky should proclaim, *DIVIDE ET IMPERA*.

The defects of the system thus outlined are obvious. New Testament principles are unwarrantably applied. (1) There is the confusion of a spiritual and political republic. If it were shown that the government of the Church must be based upon a political system, it would have to be proved *what* political system. To affirm the political anti-State-Church and Whig principles of Congregationalism would be a miserable *petitio principii*. Moreover, there is no New Testament justification for transferring a democratic or any other theory of civil government to the administration of that

kingdom which is not of this world. (2) There is the failure to recognise the rights and prerogatives of the Pastorate. There is no clergy-nucleus, no organised clerical brotherhood as the centre of Church government and extension. The pastor of a Congregational Church is the servant of the whole membership. In one sense he is the chief officer of the church, but he possesses no exclusive authority. There is the absence of the "pastoral rule" so prominent in the Epistles of the New Testament. (3) There is the confusion of a spiritual and ecclesiastical equality. Spiritual equality is the primary right of every believer, spiritual nurture, Christian fellowship, and free religious activity are vital demands of the soul, and are claimed by all believers without distinction of time or place. But this differs entirely from rights of legislation and administration. Neither in Church nor State can all be rulers. Wherever such extreme democracy is forced, the result is either confusion or despotism. When Congregationalism escapes both these results, its actual procedure is a violation of its theoretical polity.

2. PRESBYTERIANISM.

This was the second important stage in early Church government. It was the natural and

rational coalescence of contiguous groups of Churches. The *πρεσβυτέριον* (Presbytery) of the Apostolic Church corresponds to the Jewish "eldermen" of the congregation, or "aldermen" of the city, chosen to rule over the people collectively, or in distinct localities. The writer of the Apocalypse speaks of "the angels* of the seven Churches," meaning the messengers of God having the oversight of those Christian communities. The New Testament does not advance explicitly beyond this form of ecclesiastical administration. Modern Presbyterianism dates from the sixteenth century, and is due to the genius of Calvin. In its government both clergy and elders are members of the Church courts, and both are known as "Presbyters." The clergy are both rulers and pastors; the elders are rulers only, hence called "Ruling Elders." The principle of *Lay-ruling Elders* is peculiar to Presbyterianism; it may be justified from a regulative and expedient point of view, but we find no direct precedent in the New Testament. This polity is distinguished from Independency, which ignores ministers as a class;

* In the Classics *ἄγγελος* is synonymous with *πρέσβυς*. In Xen. *Hell. i., 4, 2*, we have *οἱ τε Λακεδαιμονίων πρέσβεις καὶ οἱ ἄλλοι ἄγγελοι*. Sometimes it is synonymous with *κῆρυξ*, vide *Anab. ii. 3, 1, et al.* [From Cremer, *Biblio-Theological Lexicon*, *Art. ἄγγελος*.]

and from Erastianism, which is lay government pure and simple. There are four courts in which the Presbyters, clerical and lay, exercise their authority : (1) The Kirk Session. This is usually the parish council, and consists of the minister and at least two lay elders as his assessors. It has authority to exercise discipline and administer religious ordinances within the parochial area. (2) The Presbytery. This consists of the pastors and representative elders from a limited district. It is a court of appeal from the Kirk Session, and possesses higher jurisdiction. 3. The Synod. This consists of a number of Presbyteries within a "Province," and includes all the members of the lower courts. It is commonly known as the "Provincial Assembly." 4. The General Assembly. This is a representative court consisting of a number of ministers and elders chosen by all the Presbyteries of the Church. This supreme court possesses administrative, judicial, and legislative powers. Its legislative authority, however, can only be exercised with the express concurrence of a majority of the Presbyteries of the Church.

The Established Church of Scotland maintains "that there is no necessary conflict between the principle of spiritual independence and the principle of a national establishment of religion,

which it holds to be the duty of the State and of the Church alike to recognise. On this vital question the civil law sustains the claims of the ecclesiastical courts. In all ecclesiastical causes and matters purely spiritual, the Church courts are by Act of Parliament declared to be supreme." The Free Church of Scotland, while refusing subjection to the State and to receive its temporalities, holds in all respects to the government, discipline, standards, and worship of the Established Church. The prosperity of the Free Church since 1843 is its Divine *imprimatur*, and proves that connection with the State is not only unnecessary, but inexpedient. There is a growing belief that the existing alliance of the Established Church with the State should be dissolved, so that all the Presbyterian Churches of Scotland might meet on a common level and form one united Christian communion.

3. EPISCOPALIANISM.

This was a further natural and reasonable development of ecclesiastical government. When a Church became so numerically strong as to require a number of Presbyters or local ministers, or when a number of contiguous Churches sought mutual association, they would require a presi-

dent, superintendent, or overseer. This last term is the literal translation of the word ἐπίσκοπος, which in Church history has been rendered "Bishop." Originally, the presiding elder in each congregation was the ἐπίσκοπος; thus there were as many bishops as there were Churches. With the growth of the Christian Church the office of the presiding elder or bishop was invested with greater authority, and his jurisdiction extended over a larger area. A little later this elevation of office became an elevation in *rank*. The bishops alone could transmit the ministry, and no Church was valid unless episcopally governed.

There are three great branches of Christ's Church which claim the Episcopacy or the Apostolical succession: the Greek, the Latin, and the Anglican. The Greek or Eastern Church holds that bishops rule *jure divino*, and that they alone can transmit Apostolic grace. But it refuses to acknowledge the Pope, or Patriarch, or any Pontiff as above the bishops, or as possessing supreme authority in the Church. The Latin or Western Church holds the dogma of the three-fold ministry: "If any one saith that in the Catholic Church there is not a hierarchy instituted by Divine ordinance, consisting of bishops, priests, and deacons, let him be anathema." The

Romish Church also maintains the infallibility of the Pope, when he speaks *ex cathedra*. The words of Cyprian, "Ecclesia est in Episcopo," concisely express the Roman Catholic doctrine.

The Anglican Church tolerates two classes of opinion respecting the Episcopacy. (1) *The Anglo-Catholic or High Church view*. In all essential particulars this is the same as the Roman Catholic doctrine. Bishops are distinct from priests and deacons, and higher than both. The *jus divinum* of Episcopacy is maintained as essential to the existence of the Church. Grace is said to be transmitted by the imposition of hands, and the Apostolical succession is a *sine qua non* of a valid Church. It is affirmed that bishops "being the successors of the Apostles, are possessed of the same power of jurisdiction." The Anglo-Catholics, however, do not recognise the supremacy and infallibility of the Pope as the Vicar of Christ, nor do they reckon ordination among the Christian Sacraments. (2) *The Low or Broad Church view*. The best representatives of this view admit that Episcopacy is not the only form of Church government with Scriptural authority; but it is the one best adapted to advance the Kingdom of God. That is, Episcopacy is not essential to the *esse* of the Church, but to its *bene esse*. This view

is compatible with what we have already stated, that the Episcopate developed out of the Presbyteriate, and consequently there were only two original orders of the ministry—presbyters and deacons. An English bishop is nominated by the Sovereign and elected by the dean and chapter of the cathedral. He has his consistory court to hear ecclesiastical causes, and pays occasional visits to the local clergy. He has the exclusive right to consecrate Churches, to ordain priests, to confirm, and to excommunicate. To assist in diocesan work there are several officers—arch-deacon, dean, chancellor, and others—whose duties are prescribed and performed under the authority of the bishop. The Archbishop, superior in office, not in order, has special privileges and functions. The Archbishop of Canterbury is the first peer of the realm.

II.—New Testament Precedents.

It cannot be too frequently pointed out that the Bible is a book of general principles, and not a code of particular rules. There is no phase of history or experience which may not be found in principle in the Scriptures, but there is no phase wrought out in all its details. The Christian

revelation contained in the New Testament is *potentially* complete and final, but its *actuality* is progressive, and adaptable to the different stages of human development. The work of the Church is not the creation of new principles, but, first, the better understanding of the implicit principles embodied in the teaching of Christ and the Apostles, and, second, their application to new and ever-increasing demands of age and place. It is time to recognise "the futility of endeavouring to make the Apostolic history into a set of authoritative precedents, to be rigorously copied without regard to time and place, thus turning the Gospel into a second Levitical code. The Apostolic age is full of embodiments of purposes and principles of the most instructive kind, but the responsibility of choosing the means was left for ever to the Ecclesia itself, and to each Ecclesia, guided by ancient precedent on the one hand, and adaptation to present and future needs on the other. The lesson-book of the Ecclesia, and of every Ecclesia, is not a law, but a history."*

1. THE FORM OF THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH
NOT A FINALITY.

Doctrine and polity, appointment of officers,

* Hort, *The Christian Ecclesia*, pp. 232-3.

and performance of rites, are all sanctioned and authorised by New Testament precedent, but the forms and methods were determined by local circumstances. "The Lord founded no order of priests, and just as little did He found a system of Church government. Everything lying in this sphere He left to be shaped by the needs and circumstances of the time. Even the institutions established by the Apostles for the guidance of particular Churches are merely finger-posts and examples, not a binding law; all that is binding on Christendom is the method of salvation, which again is not a legal one, but a method of grace." The garments of the infant Church would be unsuitable to the state of puberty, and these again to the maturity of the Church. The Church of the Dark Ages failed to recognise this fact; indeed, failure to appreciate this truth has characterised the history of ecclesiastical life since the second century. The early and mediæval Councils sought to stereotype both the doctrine and the polity of the Church. No provision was made for the evolution of mind and conscience. No creed can compass the whole truth, and no polity can claim adaptability to undeveloped phases of Church history. These may satisfy the age of their production; they will certainly be outgrown

by the next. The great disturbances of the Church—the frictions and factions—have been the struggles of the expanding mind to throw off the chafing shackles of a creed and a polity no longer broad enough for the age. It would be a sad inversion of reason to suppose that the Fathers of the first few centuries could formulate a system of doctrine and establish a form of Church government that should be immortal. To assert such an opinion is but another way of saying that the early Fathers could cramp and bind the human mind and affections for ever. Even if a particular and definite form of Church discipline were discoverable in the New Testament, there would still be lacking any indication that it was binding for all ages and places. It is a most baseless assumption that Church order must be the same in the fourth and in the nineteenth centuries; the same in Asia as in America. “The excellence of outward forms and regulations must be measured by their suitableness in particular circumstances to promote the spiritual ends for which Christianity exists, and by nothing else.”

2. THE BASIS OF THE EARLIEST TYPE OF ORGANISATION.

It has been often remarked that the New Testa-

ment gives no account of the *institution* of any type of Church government. But this statement overlooks an important fact, and often leads to erroneous conclusions. Every society of men must have leaders and rules of some sort. At first the position of leaders may be informal, and the rules unwritten and elastic. But *some* person to take the initiative, and *some* rules for common action there must be. This is a natural law arising from the nature of things and from the constitution of man. The organisation of the Church, however rudimentary, can be no exception to natural law. It is remarkable, therefore, that the New Testament gives no account of the general rules which guided the Apostles in the organisation of the primitive Church, unless such rules previously existed.

The Hebrew-Christian Church was conformed to the model of the Jewish synagogue. The type of Church government which had been established for generations among the Hebrew community in Palestine and the Diaspora was accepted and utilised by the Apostles. The cardinal institution in the Jewish Church was the *eldership*. This idea was borrowed by the founders of the Christian Church, and became the chief institution in its organisation. We may, therefore, speak of

both the Hebrew and the Christian Church polity as *Presbyterian*. "This, then, is the reason why you do not find distinct traces in the New Testament of the creation of the Presbyterian form of Church government. The Apostles could not create what had been in use some hundreds of years before they were born. They themselves were all of them Presbyterians before they were Christians. And these are the two facts, the knowledge of which makes us intelligent Presbyterians: First, that the form of government in the Church before Christ came was Presbyterian; and, secondly, that this form of government was not abolished nor altered, but simply accepted and perpetuated by the Apostles. It was extended to all the groups of people who received Christ." In coming to this conclusion we would point out two things: (1) The basal element of Presbyterianism in the Apostolic Church was to grow with the development of the society, expand with the emergencies of history, and adapt itself to the conditions of each new age. (2) It by no means follows that modern Presbyterianism in all its phases and peculiarities is a faithful reproduction of the New Testament type.

3. THE MODE OF APPOINTING CHURCH OFFICERS.

Here, as in other respects, we must look for general principles, rather than details, in the election to ecclesiastical positions. While the New Testament precedents are not stereotyped, yet the Church of to-day should not ignore the Apostolic types.

(1) *The Appointment of Elders.*—Before Pentecost the Twelve formed the nucleus of the Christian Church. When Judas fell there remained a gap, which Christ left vacant at His ascension, but which was filled before “the day of Pentecost was fully come.” The mode of the election of Matthias is given with some particulars which were probably intended as a pattern to the Church for future elections into its ministry. The election is preceded by prayer and study of the Scriptures; then the matter is introduced by one already in office. A statement is made indicating God’s will and the qualifications necessary for the ministry. The *election* rests with the whole company, “with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brethren”; the *approval* rests with the Apostles, who formally admitted Matthias into their number. One omission is noticeable, “there is no mention of any imposition of hands

any more than in the account of the appointment of the original Apostles of our Lord." Two things may be observed: (1) Imposition of hands is not an essential element in the ordination of Church officers of the highest order; (2) "imposition of hands in the case of ordination is a natural symbol indicative of the transmission of function and authority." After Pentecost "elders" were associated with the Apostles in Jerusalem; in some places they appear alone. No doubt they existed before Pentecost and were more or less in touch with the Apostles; but they were not mentioned by name till the close of the first section of the Acts. The formation of the Jerusalem Church is described with some minuteness, yet there is no account of the appointment of elders. The explanation has been indicated. Among the Hebrew Christians at Jerusalem there was a sufficient number of elders—men who had held that office in the Jewish synagogue, and, becoming Christians, continued their office in the Christian Church *without re-ordination*. In new Churches subsequently formed by the Apostles, the appointment of elders was one of the first and chief concerns. We find Paul and Barnabas ordaining "elders in every Church." We may conclude that the election and ordination of these elders

to the Presbyteriate conformed to the mode followed in the appointment of Matthias to the Apostolate.

(2) *The Appointment of Deacons.*—The office of deacons in the Christian Church was justified partly by ancient Jewish custom, and partly by the exigencies of the time. The appointment of the “seven” is recorded with much precision in Acts vi., and the method probably contains some permanent elements.* An emergency arises respecting the poorer members of the Church—it is a financial question. The causal circumstances and the suggested course of action are brought by the Apostles before a specially convened meeting of the whole Church. The members of the Church, in their collective capacity, choose from among themselves the “seven men” whom they regard fittest for the office, and “put them before the Apostles.” The Apostles, approving of the choice, formally set the men apart to the diaconate by prayer and imposition of hands. There is no material divergence between the method adopted in the election of Matthias and that followed in the ordination of the seven. In both cases, while the whole Church is consulted, the Apostles “claim the power of ordination and appointment for them-

* See the very suggestive notes of Meyer, *Comm.*, Acts vi. 3.

selves. The people nominated while the Apostles appointed.”

The office of deaconess is not very clearly indicated in the New Testament, but there is sufficient Scriptural ground for the office. In one passage, at least, the office of deaconess is referred to by name.* Such an office was, no doubt, a necessity of the times. The life of women was separate and secluded, and involved a kind of ministration that could be best performed by women. The *Apostolic Constitutions* give illustrations of this propriety in connection with Baptism, visiting the women's part of a house and introducing women to the bishop. It would, perhaps, be unsafe to affirm that deaconesses held an ecclesiastical office in the New Testament Church; their work may have been rather auxiliary to the regular diaconate. That the office should be retained and utilised in the modern Church is desirable from many points of view. Deaconesses would constitute a very useful auxiliary in the organisation of any Church. They could not only relieve the pastor of much visitation, but they could render

* Rom. xvi. 1, where Phœbe is described as “a servant (κιάκονον = deaconess) of the Church.” Probably those mentioned in verse 12 were deaconesses. No other trace of the office is found in the New Testament. Cf. *Inter. Crit. Comm. in loc.*

help in cases which could not be reached by the pastor. The modern sisterhoods of the Episcopal Church, and the institution of deaconesses in some Free Churches, are, like so many of our present ecclesiastical equipments, revivals of Apostolic and primitive types and precedents.

The broad distinction here drawn between presbyters and deacons must not be pressed too absolutely. When the "seven" were appointed over the financial business of the Church, they were not excluded from the presbyter's work. And when the Apostles desired to give themselves to "the ministry of the Word," they did not relinquish all the secular responsibilities of the Church. The division of labour here indicated, however, is unquestionably of paramount importance in the efficient government of the Church. The tendency of the present age is to make unreasonable demands upon the presbyters of the Church for purely secular and financial affairs. The chief work of the presbyter is "in the ministry of the Word," that is, the chief function of the ordained minister is *preaching*. Find an age in which preaching was neglected, and you find an age in which the Church declined. Point out a Church that subordinates preaching to social gatherings and financial schemes, and you

point out a Church that is on its way to death and burial. A preacher's chief work is preaching, and he can better afford to neglect everything else rather than suffer his pulpit ministrations to decline. No presbyter should allow himself to be deceived by the specious cry for pastoral visitation. This cry often proceeds from persons who have retired from business, and others whose lack of employment affords them much time for gossip and a great opportunity for fault-finding. These persons are influenced more by a minister's *bon-homie* than by his preaching. There is a true pastoral visitation and there is a true social element in Christianity, neither of which can be ignored without serious consequences to both Church and pastor. St. Paul went teaching, and even weeping, "from house to house" (*κατ' οἴκους*), beseeching men to be reconciled to God. This is an integral part of the presbyter's function, and must be distinguished from that perfunctory visitation whose least evil is to kill time. We recognise fully the importance of the pastoral and social phases of the ministry, yet everything must be subordinated to the public preaching of the Word: "Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel."

If there are not so many great preachers in

the Church to-day as there were fifty years ago, the reason has been indicated. Men are not less capable to-day, but their time is absorbed in manifold financial schemes, and wasted at ever-increasing social functions. The results are empty sanctuaries and declining Churches. Not until presbyters fearlessly return to Apostolic precedent will the Church of Christ be rescued: "It is not fit that we should forsake the Word of God, and serve tables. . . . But we will continue steadfastly in prayer, and in the ministry of the Word."

4. LOCAL AUTONOMY.

When the Asiatic Churches were founded by the missionary Apostles they were independent of any foreign or outside authority. In no case was it enjoined that any community of Christians should be under the control of some other community. The Churches at Corinth and Ephesus were never commanded by their Apostolic founders to submit their local arrangements to the older Church at Jerusalem. Isolated and scattered congregations were enjoined to yield obedience to their own local leaders and pastors; but these leaders and pastors were never enjoined to submit to any metropolitan or central Church authority.

Under their one Head and guided by His Spirit, local Churches had the right to legislate on matters affecting their own organisation and discipline. Nor could it be otherwise in the primitive Churches—(1) because these Churches were separated by long distances and there was no easy method of communication; (2) because each town or province had its peculiar characteristics, and the polity suitable to one might not profit all; (3) because the Church organism, like every other, develops most naturally within the liberty of its own environment, and not by enforced and mechanical *ab extra* influences. It must, however, be carefully observed that while each local Church had the *right* of self-government, this right was never exercised in any exclusive or extreme form. As a matter of *expediency* and mutual consolidation, the isolated Churches did confer as far as practicable and submit to each other certain questions which agitated their respective communions. Hence, probably, an absolutely independent Church is foreign to the New Testament.

5. THE GROWTH OF INTER-COMMUNION.

While the Apostolic Churches were independent ecclesiastical institutions and possessed the right of local autonomy, yet very early in

their history, on grounds of expediency, they co-operated and constituted an inchoate community of Churches, or a connexionalism in germ. The following points will justify this position.

(1) *The Church at Jerusalem was regarded as the common standard of reference.*—The Apostolic Council at Jerusalem did not claim to be the seat of authority for all the Churches; but the weaker and more isolated congregations found it much to their advantage to refer certain questions for decision to the older Church at Jerusalem. The case of the Antioch Church is significant. A discussion arose respecting a Jewish ceremony. The disputation was so sharp that it was difficult to settle the matter in the agitated local Church. And “they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain others of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the Apostles and elders, about this question.” Two things are noticeable: (1) The reference to the Jerusalem Church was *voluntary* on the part of the members at Antioch; the former did not claim authority to suppress the right of local independence, and the latter were not constrained to surrender that right. (2) The Apostolic Council makes this the occasion of formulating decrees for the guidance of other Churches. These decrees, however, must be

regarded as tentative and recommendatory rather than possessing œcumenical authority.

(2) *Financial Co-operation.*—It is not a little remarkable that the financial condition of the Apostolic Churches was almost the first factor in developing the spirit of mutual assistance and social and ecclesiastical inter-action. Out of this sprang the order of deacons, whose primitive function was the care of the poor and the management of the secular offices of the Church. Contributions were sent from one congregation to assist the poor of another congregation. This practice was general in Apostolic times. Writing to the Corinthians, the Apostle says: "Concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the Churches of Galatia, even so do ye." The different Churches were thus under a common direction, and were distinctly "referred to each other for regulative precedents and examples for imitation." Again to the same Church: "Not that other men be eased and ye burdened; but by an equality, that now at this time your abundance may be a supply for their want; that their abundance also may be a supply for your want; that there may be equality." The principle of New Testament communism and mutual aid could not be expressed in more definite terms. Paul also

claimed that his personal maintenance was the common care of the Churches. "Ye have done well that ye did communicate with my affliction." We are well aware that "the common care of all the Churches for each, and their obligation to afford mutual help in proportion to emergent necessities—the dependence of the Apostle himself, whilst prosecuting his missionary labours, upon the common love and duty of the Churches to which he had ministered—all this, though it strongly savours of the principle, does not absolutely prove the fact of connexional organisation as characterising the early Churches." *

(3) *Plurality of Congregations and Pastors.*—The word Church is sometimes employed in the Acts and Epistles in a collective sense. It does not invariably signify one company of believers assembled in one place for worship; it sometimes includes a number of such companies located in the same town or district. The chief argument in support of this view is the number of members who must have constituted some of the Apostolic Churches. The Church at Jerusalem and Ephesus probably contained no fewer than ten thousand members. These Churches could not be ac-

* Rigg, *Connexional Polity*, p. 13. I am indebted to this work for some suggestions in the last section of this Lecture.

commodated in one building; the primitive Christians possessed no large sanctuaries for their religious services. In a Church of ten thousand or fifteen thousand members there must have been a number of separate congregations and separate administration of religious ordinances. But these separate gatherings constituted only one Church under a common polity. There was mutual assistance and inter-communion, that is, connexional unity. When we read of "Churches in houses," we do not suppose that they were absolutely independent communities, with separate government and pastors. "No evidence exists that the Christian community in any one city was divided into as many separate organisations as there were separate places of assembly for public worship." It is quite likely, however, that each congregation and household assembly had its own teacher and sacramental ordinances. But these worked in harmony and co-operation with other such gatherings in the same city or neighbourhood. Hence we conclude: (1) A small company worshipping in a house may be called a Church; but in this case it signifies an assembly or meeting of believers. (2) The aggregation of such branch-meetings or tributary assemblies in any place may also be called a Church, since

they are governed by the same authority and submit to a common discipline.

III.—Connexionalism versus Independency.

Fifty years ago there was considerable and bitter controversy between the representatives of the Independent and Presbyterian types of Church government. The Congregationalists were on the one side and the Methodists were on the other. The former claimed Divine right and New Testament precedent for their independency; the latter with equal confidence claimed Scriptural sanction for their connexionalism, and justified their position on the ground of adaptation and expediency. Both parties were probably biassed by training and associations in favour of their respective theories, and consequently advocated extreme views. The day of bitter rivalry has happily passed, and the Free Churches are studiously cultivating a true *rapprochement*. There is a tendency in Congregationalism to become more connexional, and a tendency in Methodism to become more congregational. The ideal Church polity is probably in some *via media*, but tending towards connexionalism rather than independency.

1. DEFECTS OF EXTREME INDEPENDENCY.

(1) *Lack of Strength from Union.*—Independency may be carried to such an extent that no aggregation of isolated congregations can properly be termed a Church. Such independency may flatter itself with ideas about Divine rights and Apostolic models, separation from the State and perfect freedom ; but it lacks compactness, mutual sympathy, power of co-operation, defence and aggression from concerted action, and provision for the spiritual needs of small and impoverished rural populations. There is weakness in any division of force or interest. The strength of an army is not in its scattered regiments, but in its united battalions. The triumph of the Church against the world is assured, not to dislocated and divided onslaughts, but to concentrated efforts and confederated spirits. “Stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the Gospel.”

(2) *Insufficient Guarantee of Purity.*—This is chiefly noticeable in regard to the ministry. The New Testament precedent indicates that the fidelity of the ministry is entrusted to the surveillance of the pastorate itself. Some sort of Episcopal oversight of the ministry is a desidera-

tum in every Church. In an isolated and independent congregation there is no protection against theological error or moral default. That one such congregation is satisfied with the teaching, character, and general qualifications of a minister is not a sufficient credential for the acceptance of that minister as pastor of another congregation. A thoroughly systematised union of Churches and of ministers provides the necessary checks and guarantees in these respects. The Apostles not only claimed the prerogative of appointing teachers and pastors to the several Churches, but they were the guardians of pure doctrine and faithful discipline. Thus Paul wrote to Timothy: "Charge certain men not to teach a different doctrine." Some central court or ecclesiastical tribunal is essential to the maintenance of a pure ministry. Such a Church court should be (1) absolutely impartial in its constitution and procedure, and should have (2) absolute authority to adjudicate on questions of doctrines and character.

(3) *Deprecation of the Authority of the Pastorate.*
—In an Independent Church the people elect by direct vote, and consequently the minister is henceforth completely dependent upon them for his position and power. An Independent minister is the most dependent of all God's servants. His utter-

ance is valid only in so far as it expresses the opinion of the majority of his members. Indeed, he possesses no ruling power and may be humiliated in many ways. The language of John Angell James is probably too severe as characterising the whole Independent ministry, yet it contains a modicum of unpleasant truth: "The pastor is depressed far below his just level. His opinion is received with no deference, his person treated with no respect, and, in the presence of some of his lay-tyrants, if he has anything to say, it must be something similar to the ancient sooth-sayers; he is only permitted to peep and mutter from the dust." A few pastors of exceptional ability, whose praise is in all the Churches, and who are recognised leaders of thought, are practically independent of their congregations, and they lead their deacons captive at their will. But it will not be denied that a considerable number of Independent ministers stand in jeopardy every hour. Only a union of Churches upon the connexional principle can remedy this galling defect.

(4) *Inadequate Lay Agency*.—This applies chiefly to the absence of lay preaching in Independent Churches. Where there is a fixed minister for each congregation there can be no place for lay preachers. In such cases the pastor has a monopoly

of pulpit teaching, and no provision is made for preaching the Gospel to those who do not sit under that exclusive ministry. It is certain that in New Testament times "many besides the appointed pastors of the Churches were accustomed to exercise a 'gift of teaching,' or of 'exhortation.'" Moreover, the Independent system provides "no nursery for the ministry, no introductory or preparatory grade of office, out of which suitable persons might be taken as candidates for the separated ministry; no preliminary condition in which capacity and fitness for the ministry may be discovered, tested, and trained." We rejoice to admit that some Independent Churches largely atone for this defect by the splendid missions which are conducted in various thickly-populated districts under the direction of deacons and lay elders. These social, philanthropic, and evangelical crusades afford valuable opportunities for the exercise of the manifold gifts of the consecrated laity. These efforts, however, always depend upon the spirit of enthusiasm in the local Church, and are subject to fluctuations. The need is for some connexional polity, systematising the regular and recognised employment of the gifts and graces of the great body of the Protestant laity.

(5) *Incompetent Missionary Force.*—An Indepen-

dent Church cannot send out many evangelists to the "regions beyond," nor to desolate districts at home. This might be done to some extent by a large and wealthy Church; but could not be attempted by small and isolated congregations struggling for their own existence in villages and country districts. Nothing is more certain than that the Apostolic Church sent messengers from city to city and from shore to shore. The spirit of liberality for the purposes of missionary aggression was consistently inculcated by St. Paul. A self-centred Church must lack this spirit of true evangelism and catholicity; it becomes selfish, languid, and unprogressive. It is when Churches unite that a powerful missionary agency is constituted and gigantic enterprises made possible. Churches must realise that the success of one is the success of the whole, and that by concerted action alone can the glad tidings of salvation be carried to the ends of the earth.

2. ADVANTAGES OF SOME CONNEXIONALISM.

The unrest in modern Congregationalism is significant. Since the Revolution of 1688 Congregationalism has been most jealous of its independency. During the last two hundred years many attempts have been made to form associations and councils,

but not till recently have these been encouraged. Of late, however, several proposals have been made to consolidate the work of Congregationalism by associating the Independent Churches. The modern unrest is significant in two respects : (1) it is a reaction from the earlier extreme Independency, which put the Church outside the law of ecclesiastical evolution ; (2) it is an indication that Congregationalism is seeking some form and degree of connexionalism. Congregationalism has always been better in practice than in theory. In several respects it violates the fundamental principle of Independency. The Church-Aid Society, the London Missionary Society, the County Associations, the Annual Unions, not to mention the suggested Sustentation Fund, are all inconsistent with absolute Independency, and are types of connexionalism. At present Congregationalism feels the need of some central authority, which should have power to formulate decrees and authority to render them effective. Such a central authority we regard as necessary to regulate the Church in the fulfilment of her Divine mission. But this authority should not destroy self-government, or nullify local autonomy.

(1) *Prevention of anomalies respecting the Ministry.*

—A few Christians may constitute a Church ; they

may elect a certain man, and he becomes their pastor. There is no objection to this provided this company of Christians will support him, and he is prepared to accept what they offer, and take his chance when they no longer require his services. The position, however, is too precarious to be advocated. Again, when a minister has for some legitimate reason resigned one pastorate, there should be some method by which another should be open to him. It is deplorable that really good men should remain months, or even years, without being able to obtain a pastorate. Again, when a minister has faithfully performed his office until old age or failing health render it impossible for him to continue his work, some provision should be made for him. The majority of ministers of Independent Churches find it impossible to put by a portion of their stipend for sickness and old age. Indeed, some of them are half-starved while in full work. It is evident that these problems can only be met and solved by some form of co-operation, some type of connexionalism. Again, a change of pastorate would often benefit both minister and people. Few men can maintain an effective ministry before one congregation for a long term of years. Unless a man has great natural resources, the same scenes, the

same hearers, the same routine of duty, the same monotony of experience, will not continue to replenish his repertory of illustrations and invigorate and inspire his mind. John Wesley refused to "believe that it was ever the will of our Lord that any congregation should have one teacher only." Different men have different talents and methods, and different congregations have different tastes and requirements. To meet the conditions of both parties a judicious type of itinerancy is essential. Again, connexionalism renders the minister and the people truly independent. The minister is not a mere tool to be employed at the caprice of a majority. He can dare to do right, without fear of rejection or starvation. In a properly-organised connexionalism no unpopular pastor could force his continuance upon an unwilling congregation, and no discontented Church could force its pastor into the street. Other things being equal, Denominational co-operation would meet both these conditions.

(2) *Benefits of a Common Exchequer.*—The spiritual importance of money is not sufficiently realised in the Church. Some foolish teachers magnify poverty as if it were synonymous with piety, and denounce wealth as if it were synony-

mous with wickedness. Poverty is a greater curse than wealth; and we do not wish the Church to be less rich in finance, but more communistic in its distribution. No Christian community can accomplish permanent spiritual work while its financial basis is unsound and chaotic. Paul, who was a practical logician, insisted upon the monetary aspect of Christianity as binding upon the primitive Churches. The principle was not merely self-preservation, but mutual advancement. Each local Church was to provide, not exclusively for its own necessitous members, but the richer were to contribute toward the poorer. The Apostle distinctly enjoins the Corinthians to make a collection and send their "liberality unto Jerusalem."* The co-operative principle of finance applies in manifold ways. From a central fund, contributed by the associated Churches, poorly-paid ministers should be assisted. Such an arrangement would be an unspeakable boon for struggling Churches in impoverished districts. By means of support from a general

* The true connexional idea is what St. Paul calls the equality (*ισότητος*) which proves the sincerity of love, the brotherly equalisation which guards against superfluity on the one hand, and lack on the other (2 Cor. viii.). This must be distinguished from the *real community of goods* (*εἶχον ἅπαντα κοινά*) in the Jerusalem Church, which was nowhere else attempted and never enjoined by the Apostles (Acts ii. 44).

fund more aggressive evangelical work could be undertaken in the villages of the country. And this is becoming an imperative necessity as a bulwark against the Romanising teaching of the parish clergy. From a general fund, too, substantial help could be afforded in the erection of new Churches in neglected rural districts and rapidly-growing city suburbs. Without some co-operative organisation it would be impossible to promote, on a wide and successful basis, home and foreign missionary enterprises. As a matter of fact, all the great Churches in England—some in violation of the principle of Independency—have institutions and agencies founded on the connexional idea.

(3) *Incitement to a Wider Outlook.*—Complete Independency tends to narrow the outlook, cramp the mind, and limit the field of interest. Connexionalism tends to remove selfishness and to expand the sympathies of the soul. Periodic reunions of ministers tend to promote the Christian *esprit de corps*, which necessarily influences the tone of all the associated Churches. A minister may come from a small and isolated Church, but he is not dispirited; he knows he is a respected member of a great fraternity. He rightly claims and

justly receives the same consideration and privilege as the minister of the largest and most influential Church. Properly organised conclaves of pastors and laymen for the consideration of ecclesiastical affairs make the care of one Church the care of the whole. There is no impecunious cringing on the part of the weaker Churches, and no monetary tyranny on the part of the stronger; the latter cheerfully co-operate with the former. Again, connexionalism enables the associated Churches to attempt greater things in the matter of education. A single congregation cannot support a college for the training of ministers, but an association of congregations could establish and maintain colleges of the highest academic value. So in regard to literature. An isolated Church cannot sustain a publishing establishment, and issue books, reviews, and magazines to command the reading public. But a connexion of Churches should maintain a publishing house on the most successful business principles, and produce literature of the most varied character and of the highest quality, that should influence large sections of the general community. There is no reason why a great association of Churches should not train and employ some men as experts in the fields of science,

archæology, Biblical criticism, and literature in its loftiest phases. All these departments of thought should be rescued and consecrated by the Christian Church. But again, this ideal can only be attained by some organised ecclesiastical co-operation.

V.

THE POSITION OF THE LAITY.

THE POSITION OF THE LAITY.

THE use of the word laity (λαός) in the New Testament is similar to that in the Septuagint. It denotes (1) a collection of tribes, and is parallel with "the nations" (τὰ ἔθνη); (2) the people of Israel as distinguished from the nations, and figuratively the Christian fellowship (λαὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ); (3) the people as a whole, the mass, sometimes the democracy (δημος), and sometimes the *people* as distinct from the *presbyters*. From this last usage has been developed the technical meaning of the word in the Church. The laity are the members of the congregation as distinguished from the clergy. Our object is to show that in the primitive Church there was theoretical and practical parity of all believers; that this New Testament parity of Christians has been perverted or denied by Romanists and High Anglicans; and that while the Reformed Churches have theoretically admitted the spiritual equality of all believers, their practical treatment of the laity is open to criticism. In seeking to fulfil this object we shall

touch briefly the history and ecclesiastical polity of the various great branches of the universal Church.

I.—The Position of the Laity in the New Testament.

The introduction of Christianity was such a complete reaction against ancient Judaism that the old notions of the priesthood were entirely swept away. The Old Testament preserved the order of priests within cast-iron bounds; the New Testament declared the true priestly character of all Christians. That a distinction in office sprang up before the close of the Apostolic canon we shall readily admit. But the distinction was regulative, economic, and disciplinary. The equality in spiritual rank is legitimately claimed, and should be unhesitatingly granted, by all who base their ecclesiastical views upon the teaching of Christ and the Apostles. We should carefully mark the distinction between the Divine ordination of all believers and the human ordination of some to particular forms of Church work, such ordination having Divine sanction. Our thesis here is, that in spiritual life presbyters and laity are on the same footing, that the functions performed by the presbyters are such as, apart from the question of order, may be performed by the

laity, that the ecclesiastical difference is not one of kind, but of status or degree.

1. THE FUNDAMENTAL EQUALITY OF MEN.

The unity of mankind is no longer a debatable dogma, but an instinctive doctrine of the nations. Primitive society developed according to consanguinity, and this produced tribal caste and national exclusiveness. Roman jurisdiction embodied the preservation of the rights of the individual and equal justice to all. It did much to remove the unnatural barrier between Greek and barbarian, patrician and plebeian, employer and employed. Impartial legislation in ancient Rome, however, was theoretical rather than practical. Christianity attempted to bind mankind into a common fellowship, irrespective of social rank or national origin. But the world was not ripe for this Christian ideal, and the Church, which ignored slavery in domestic life and overlooked despotism in State affairs, was really sacrificing the principle of equality which it sought to promote. The degenerate mediæval Church did not fail to profit by this inconsistent position of Christianity. The distinction between the spiritual and secular orders, which was born and fostered in early asceticism, was forced to its logical issue. The spiritual

orders were, of course, regarded as higher than the secular, and Hildebrand demanded that the Church should govern the world. The Reformation denied the distinction between the spiritual and secular members of the Church. It asserted "that the Divine principle could be realised, and ought to be realised, in the life of the laity as much as in that of the clergy, in the State as much as in the Church."* The Divine right of kings and of priests gave way to the Divine right of humanity; the exclusiveness of Judaism was supplanted by the cosmopolitanism of Christianity; the papal hierarchy was overthrown by the priesthood of the whole Church.

2. THE PRIESTHOOD OF ALL BELIEVERS.

The points of difference between the Jewish and Christian Church are set forth clearly by the Apostle Peter and in the Epistle to the Hebrews. The Jews had a temple of God, Christians *are* the temple of God; the former was built of inanimate matter, the latter are *living* stones; the former introduced a particular priesthood into the Church, the latter constitute a *ιεράτευμα ἅγιον*, "a holy priesthood"; in the former, sacrifices were offered by the few for the whole congregation;

* Caird, *Evolution of Religion*, Vol. I., p. 17.

in the latter, each member offers spiritual sacrifice in the name of the one High-Priest. "The idea of a universal priesthood here expressed is opposed not only to the Catholic doctrine of a particular priesthood, but to all teaching with regard to the office of the administration of word and Sacrament which in any way ascribes to its possessors an importance in the Church, resting on Divine mandate, and *necessary* for the communication of salvation (*i.e.*, priestly importance)." But in asserting the doctrine of the universal priesthood of believers we must guard against two errors.

- (1) The sacerdotal theory of the ministry. This is emphatically repudiated by every New Testament writer; it is dishonouring to the dignity and office of our Lord, and inconsistent with the principle of spiritual equality. Whenever the New Testament speaks of sacrifice in Christian worship the reference is either "to the priestly character of all true believers, or is figuratively applied to the functions of the ministry."
- (2) The denial of a ministerial order. For the regulation and perpetuation of the Church rules and officers are essential factors. The New Testament makes it certain that a regular and uniform ministerial constitution was appointed for the administration of Church functions after the

extraordinary gifts of the Apostles were withdrawn. Hence the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers, while utterly opposed to modern sacerdotal claims, is perfectly consistent with a ministerial order, whose functions are ministering the Word, shepherding the flock, and guiding the Church.

3. THE CO-OPERATION OF THE LAITY IN CHURCH ADMINISTRATION.

(1) *In the Election of Church Officers.*—The celebrated Hooker makes this admission: "Till it be proved that some special law of Christ hath for ever annexed unto the clergy alone the power to make ecclesiastical laws, we are to hold it a thing most consonant with equity and reason, that no ecclesiastical laws be made in a Christian commonwealth, without consent as well of the laity as of the clergy."* Bannerman, in a very able work on this subject, says: "It seems a fair inference, from all the circumstances of the case, that the choice of the presbyters in each congregation was entrusted to the members of the Church. . . . Both in the appointment of an Apostle and in that of the seven deacons the election was made by the whole body of the

* *Eccles. Pol.*, Vol. II. p. 451.

disciples. . . . The initiation as regards choice lay with the members of the Christian community as a body.”* In his *Ecclesiastical Polity of the New Testament* Dr. Jacob sums up his argument thus: “(i.) In the appointment and removal of the ministers themselves; (ii.) in the general edification and discipline of the Church; (iii.) in questions of doctrine and dogmatic teaching, the laity had a voice and were able to make it heard.”† These are statements which no sophistry can explain away, and they are sufficient to show that the ritualistic assumptions respecting the hierarchy are without Scriptural warrant and utterly baseless. It may also appear that the practice in some Free Churches of admitting and excluding ministers by the pastorate alone is not quite in harmony with New Testament precedent and primitive Christianity. Whether this practice of exclusive pastoral authority has been rendered expedient by the development of the Church may be an open question and must be decided upon other grounds.

(2) *In the Administration of Church Sacraments.* Nowhere in the New Testament is a spiritual act mentioned which in itself was of such a nature

* *Scripture Doctrine of the Church*, pp. 536-538.

† *Ecl. Pol. of the New Test.*, pp. 146, 147.

that it could not be performed by every Church member. "There are positively no sacred rites or acts which it is declared in the New Testament *must* be administered by men ordained, or in any way separated from the general body of Christians. The two Sacraments are justly considered the most solemn of Christian ordinances; but even for *them* such administration is nowhere commanded. With regard to Baptism, the Apostles evidently did not care to baptize with their own hands, but directed others to perform the rite. And lay Baptism has always been considered valid, even in the most sacerdotal periods of the Church. . . . The celebration of the Eucharist at first included an actual supper, in imitation of the scene at its institution. And, as at the Jewish Passover, any person might preside, usually the master of the house. This was probably the case in the earliest times in the Christian Church also. And so Pressensé remarks that the words of St. Paul to the Corinthians imply that all Christians might break the bread and bless the cup at the Lord's Supper, and not an officiating minister only; for he says, 'the bread which *we* break,' and 'the cup of blessing which *we* bless.'"* This is not the place to point

* Jacob, *Eccl. Pol.*, pp. 144—145.

out the traditional growths and priestly usurpations in the history of these solemn ordinances. We wish here simply to indicate the position of lay members in the New Testament Church with respect to ecclesiastical rites. With the development of the Church, *order* in the formation of its organisation, and *regularity* in the administration of its Sacraments, were rendered expedient and imperative.

At the same time, we would emphasize the belief that the exclusion of the laity in the administration of the Holy Communion is unscriptural and impolitic. At the institution of the Lord's Supper the disciples were assembled round a table, not kneeling at a chancel-rail. Christ blessed the bread and the cup, and they passed from His hands round the table from disciple to disciple. This is the natural interpretation of what took place in the upper-room, and this was the method of celebrating the rite in the primitive Church. Kneeling at the chancel-rail in little companies, and each receiving the elements from the hands of the ordained minister alone, though understood to be a form of expediency, has still to many minds an unwelcome appearance of sacerdotalism. This is the order observed in the Roman and Anglican Churches, in some Lutheran Churches, in the Methodist Episcopal Church of America,

and in the Wesleyan Methodist Church of England. The more Scriptural and primitive method is observed in Churches of the Calvinistic type. The officiating minister offers a free prayer, and then, while repeating the words of institution, presents the elements to his neighbours on the left and right, after which the bread and wine are passed from hand to hand round the table or along the pew as the case may be. This is the more appropriate manner in which the Lord's Supper should be administered in Churches professing to be Reformed. There are circumstances in which laymen should not merely assist, but wholly administer the Sacrament. There are small congregations in many rural districts that do not see an ordained minister for months, especially on the Lord's Day. Are such congregations in consequence to be deprived of the sacred rite? Surely not. Let capable and godly laymen be commissioned to administer the Sacrament in all places where the services of a regular minister cannot be secured.

II.—The Position of the Laity in Churches of the Episcopal Type.

1. GENERAL STATEMENT OF THE POSITION.

It is important, in these days of ritualistic as-

sumptions, to distinguish between the elasticity and tentative character of ecclesiastical polity in the New Testament and the dogmatic teaching of mediæval sacerdotalists. What is not directly established and enjoined in the Scriptures we do not regard as positively imperative in the Church. Early traditions and councils have no more Divine authority than modern ecclesiastical decisions. If this distinction be clearly kept in mind we shall not be deceived by the claims of Roman cardinals and Anglican Jesuits. The earliest divergence between clergy and laity is wrapped in considerable obscurity; but the lines are clear enough for our purpose. We have shown that there is no order of clergy, in the sacerdotal sense, in the New Testament, but the doctrine of the spiritual parity of all believers. However, the New Testament does recognise two orders of Church officers, "one having more particularly the care of the spiritual interests of the flock, and the other more particularly that of its temporal or quasi-temporal affairs. The former is the Pastorate, the latter the Diaconate; and these two have been generally retained, though with different names and varying functions, by most bodies of Christian people."*

* Pope, *Comp. of Theol.*, Vol. iii., page 341.

Church the presbyteriate was only local; the presbyter had no diocese, he presided only at his own Church meetings, and his position was not ecclesiastical but prudential. This state of things remained till the second century, when an attempt was made to unite, for strength and safety, the isolated and scattered Churches. For this purpose one of the local presbyters was raised from among his peers to be the leader. With the new position the presiding elder took the title of "bishop" or "overseer," and to him the government of the Church was more and more entrusted. About the same time the three orders of Church officers came into prominence, though not with their modern pretensions. During the early decades of the second century bishops, priests, and deacons were simply distinctions of office, not of order or rank. It was in the struggle against Gnosticism and Montanism that the Episcopate attained great power, and the clergy (*regularis et secularis*) assumed a position sharply distinguished from the laity. Borrowing from Old Testament terminology, the name "priest"* was given to the clergy, and with the name they were

* The word "priest" is only an abbreviated form of "presbyter," and if the latter term had been preserved in the Book of Common Prayer much confusion would have been avoided.

invested with new place and power. Thus originated the hierarchy, whose later developments are exhibited in the assumptions, exclusiveness, bigotry, dogmatism, and casuistry of modern Romanism. The breach between clergy and laity widened, and, in spite of an occasional protest, has never been closed, and to-day Christendom is sharply divided into two camps, one clerical, the other lay.

2. THE POSITION OF THE LAITY IN THE CHURCH OF ROME.

The Greek Church differs in several respects from the Roman, but they are much alike in creed, polity, and worship. They agree much more with each other than either agrees with any Protestant Church. "They were never organically united. They differed from the beginning in nationality, language, and genius, as the ancient Greeks differed from the Romans; yet they grew up together, and stood shoulder to shoulder in the ancient conflict with Paganism and heresy." But they were finally separated after the bitter rivalry between the Patriarch of Constantinople and the Pope of Rome. The schism, which has never been healed, broke out under Photius and Nicolas I., who excommunicated each other (869

and 879). The Greek Church differs from the Roman in the following points: the *single* procession of the Holy Spirit, the equality of the patriarchs, the right of the lower clergy to marry, Communion under both kinds, immersion as the only valid form of Baptism, and a number of minor ceremonies. The laity are more independent in the Greek than in the Roman Church. The Russian Czar, like the early Byzantine Emperors, is the head of the Church in his dominions. In proceeding to point out some causes which ultimately fixed an impassable gulf between the priesthood and the people in the Roman Catholic Church, we shall see how that Church deviated from New Testament precedent and principle.

(1) *Celibacy of the Clergy.*—There is not a single text in the Gospels or Epistles which can be interpreted into a prohibition of the marriage of Christian ministers under the Gospel dispensation. There are several passages, however, which intimate that they are allowed the same liberty in this matter as other Church members enjoy. It is also certain that for many centuries after the Apostles the officiating elders and deacons were permitted to marry. Valeus, presbyter of Philippi, Tertullian, a presbyter of the second century,

Novatius and Numidius, presbyters of Carthage, Hilary, bishop of Poitiers, and many others were all married men. Pope Siricius (d. 399) was the first to forbid the marriage of the clergy, but the prohibition was little regarded until the Papacy of Gregory VII., at the end of the eleventh century. The celibacy of the clergy has neither the warrant of the New Testament nor of the early Church. Later history abundantly attests the evil results of this abuse of Christian liberty in the irregular and dissolute lives of the celibates. This priestly abuse of liberty did much to keep the clergy aloof from the common interests of the laity.

(2) *Withdrawal of the Cup.*—This disciplinary rule of the Romish Church is based upon the dogma of Concomitance, which was formally propounded by Aquinas. It is to the effect that when Christ's body is present in the Eucharist, His blood is also present. The Godhead and manhood of Christ being inseparable, it follows that Christ Himself, God and man, is present in the Eucharist when either His body or His blood is present. The bread is the body, the blood is in the body; hence the bread is sufficient, and consequently the cup was withheld from the laity. There is no justification for this dogma either in the New Testament or in primitive Church

history. The ordinance, as commanded by Christ and inculcated by Paul, ought to be administered to all believers alike. During the first twelve centuries there is no instance of the Eucharist being celebrated in one kind only. Indeed, it was regarded as sacrilege to deprive any of either bread or cup at the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. This partial administration of our Lord's most solemn ordinance made the disparity greater between the clerical and lay members of the Church.

(3) *Seclusion of the Clergy.*—With the growth of monasteries the clergy were divided into two orders. The *clerus regularis* came into existence about the eighth century, and consisted of clergy who were attached to monasteries, that is, who were monks. The *clerus secularis* were parish clergymen, or ordained ministers, who kept a school, or lived in any way not under monastic discipline. Before the Reformation the number of Regulars was very great, but since that time there have been Seculars only in the Protestant Church. With the development of mediæval sacerdotalism portions of Churches and special houses were set apart for clerical use. At length it was regarded improper and impertinent for a layman to intrude into the holy precincts of the

priests' quarters. This seclusion of the clergy and the concomitant assumptions tended to widen the breach between the hierarchy and the democracy.

(4) *Exclusion of the Laity.*—We have already indicated the right of the laity to a voice in the government of the New Testament Church. There is no Scripture which precludes any believer from performing any office in the Christian Church. It is almost certain that both Baptism and the Lord's Supper were administered in Apostolic times by laymen. The lay elders and deacons chosen by each congregation were apparently qualified to celebrate any part of Divine worship. "It is clear from both the Acts of the Apostles and St. Paul's Epistles, that 'liberty of prophesying' prevailed in the Apostolic age. It is equally clear that it existed after the Apostolic age But little by little those members of the Christian Churches who did not hold office were excluded from the performance of almost all ecclesiastical functions. At first a layman might not preach if a bishop were present, and then not if any Church officer was present, and finally not at all."* The Romish Church, which did not always re-baptize those who were once baptized by laymen, acknowledged only the validity of the

* Hatch, *Organiz. &c.*, pp. 114, 115, 124.

external part; the *spiritual* grace was afterwards vouchsafed in confirmation. On the whole, the Anglican Church maintains a similar view. Nothing is more unscriptural than the gradual decline of lay-influence and the growth of clerical power in the long and intricate history of the Christian Church. The Council of Trent even anathematised the New Testament doctrine of the priesthood of all believers. The determined exclusion of laymen from the councils and spiritual functions of the Church has resulted in the appalling indifference of great sections of the community to all ecclesiastical affairs, and in the arrogant claims and sacerdotal assumptions of the Ritualistic party.

From the foregoing considerations it will be apparent that the exclusion of the laity from a share in the management of the Romish Church was a development. To the first Councils, whether local or general, the laity were invited. But these councils grew into clerical, and ultimately into Episcopal assemblies. Although the laity and inferior clergy attended those synods, they had practically nothing to do with the final settlement of any ecclesiastical affair. Only bishops met the Metropolitan, and only bishops were summoned to the later Œcumenical Councils. "We are consequently prepared

for the fact that in such a Council as that of Trent, or the more recent one at the Vatican, none but bishops were allowed to vote. The hierarchy, in fact, absorbs all authority in the Church of Rome. They meet in sacred conclave and arrange everything. The Pope is umpire, with a right of veto; but the Christian people are handed over to the management of the bishops."*

3. THE POSITION OF THE LAITY IN THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

The teaching of the English Church in this respect is based largely upon Romish principles, and the briefest statement will be sufficient. In passing from the Roman Catholic to the Protestant Episcopal Church of England, we find little if any improvement in the position of the laity. They have not been restored to their New Testament privileges. In the organisation of the Anglican Church practically nothing is assigned to the laity. They are not consulted, trusted, considered, or endowed with any authority. They have no voice, vote, place, or power in the management of Church affairs. "The position of the English laity is neither more nor less than a rag and remnant of Popery. It is a part of that *damnosa hæreditas*

* Edgar, *The Genius of Protestantism*, p. 24.

which Rome has bequeathed to our Church, and which has never been completely purged away.’* The effect of this system is most disastrous to the Church in general and to the laity in particular. Lay Churchmen take no real interest in the work of the Church. Few understand or care what is going on in their parish or diocese; they are less concerned still with the work of Convocation—the great clerical debating society of the Church. There is no cohesion, no organisation, no representation of the laity whatever. In this the Established Church of England stands alone. Even the Episcopal Churches in America and the Colonies realise the importance of lay co-operation, and they are able to act conjointly on any emergency. No wonder that the few earnest laymen who feel the bitterness of their position talk of “reform,” “disruption,” and even “Dis-establishment.”

III.—The Position of the Laity in Churches of the Reformed Type.

Extremes in all directions tend to reaction. Priestly arrogance and corruption in the Papal Church wrought in part their own cure in the sixteenth century. The heart of Europe became

* Bishop Ryle, *Church Reform Papers*.

sick of pretence and writhed under ecclesiastical tyranny, and then the Reformation broke out. "The Reformers refused to live any longer in a lie, and chose rather to die than mock with unreality any longer the Almighty Maker of the world." In the succeeding struggle the laity partially recovered their long-lost rights. Luther broke the string which tied the tongue of the laity, and re-introduced the principle of lay representation.

1. THE LUTHERAN CHURCH.

This Church is only a partially-reformed community; it is semi-Romish in doctrine and quasi-Romish in polity. It is the connecting link between the old Latin Church and the new Protestant Church. Like all transition organisations, it is incomplete and indefinite in many phases of its ecclesiastical government. In this respect it is "without form," and darkness broods over its chaotic state. As in all communities of a Protestant type, the doctrinal position of Lutheranism was developed much earlier than its administrative form. Luther, indeed, was not an organiser like Calvin; in this respect he was the type of Whitefield rather than Wesley. The government of the Church is administered by Consistories. These consist of a mixed board of

clerical and lay officers, generally appointed by the sovereign of the country. They administer and superintend all the ecclesiastical affairs of the Church; they appoint and expel pastors, fix salaries, adjudicate in questions of doctrine and discipline, and inflict penalties. Theoretically, the priesthood of all Christians and the parity of the clergy are fundamental doctrines of Lutheranism, but practically the polity of the Church is much further removed from the primitive ideal. There is a strange mixture of Protestant liberty and sacerdotal tyranny. "In the Synodical Conference the government is, on the one hand, strictly congregational in theory, on the other hand, really despotic in fact."

2. THE CALVINISTIC CHURCH.

The doctrines of this Church are far older than Calvin. Originally the doctrines were known as Augustinianism, from Augustine, the earliest advocate. Calvin, however, developed only a portion of Augustine's system, viz., the doctrines of sin, grace, and predestination. Both Luther and Calvin differed from Augustine on justification, the rule of faith, the Church, and many other points. Augustine taught many of the leading doctrines of the Romish Church, and he is quoted

by that Church as the greatest authority among the Fathers. It is, therefore, the anti-Pelagian Augustinianism of which Calvinism is a development in Protestant form. While a student for Holy Orders at Paris, Calvin entertained doubts respecting the priesthood, and became more and more dissatisfied with the teaching of Rome. Becoming a convert to the Reformed faith, he vigorously prosecuted his ideals—Presbyterianism in the Church, and Republicanism in the State. He allowed to the Church greater authority than any other Reformer. In his ecclesiastical scheme he had in mind a theocracy such as that of the Israelites. He recommended obedience to the regular civil powers; but he taught that Church and State had separate and exclusive jurisdiction. When civil cases arose the Church should hand the offender over to the State for trial and punishment; but in matters of doctrine the authority of the Church should be absolute and final. Calvin held that the ministry was Divinely constituted, and to it the members of the Church were bound to pay deference. The Consistory was composed of ministers and elders: thus both ordained and lay presbyters were responsible for the administration of the Church.

3. THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

This must be regarded as a translation of Continental Calvinism. The distinctive feature is the doctrine of the eldership. All the Reformers desired to restore to the congregations their primitive and New Testament rights, but they differed in method. The Lutheran divines taught the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers, and the right of the people to call, install, and dismiss their pastors. But the Wittenburg Reformers failed to restore the eldership. Besides the preacher's office they recognised only one other to be provided for ecclesiastically, viz., the care of the poor. Thus we have "teachers" and "deacons," but no "elders." This office was first set forth in a practical form by Calvin. He made the elders the third in official rank, following the "pastors" and the "teachers"; the "deacons" came fourth. This order of Calvin, however, is plainly not Apostolic, "for the simple reason that in the Apostolic Church the elders had the entire government of the congregations, and the preachers were not next to them or above them, but simply members of the congregations—perhaps elders, perhaps not; for as yet the order of preachers had

not been developed." The fundamental doctrine of Presbyterianism is "that the government of the Church appointed in the New Testament was by presbyteries, that is, by associations of ministers and ruling-elders, all possessed of equal powers, without any superiority among them, either in office or in order." There are three courts, viz., the Session, the Presbytery, and the Synod. The minister with the elders of each congregation form the session, which is the spiritual court of the local Church. All members in full communion are entitled to vote in the election of the minister, the elders, and other office-bearers of the congregation. In many Churches there is a Congregational Committee. The members of this Committee have charge of the temporal affairs of the Church, and in some sense correspond to the office of "deacons" in the primitive Church. They are elected to office by the members in full communion. In so far as the Presbyterian government is representative it can claim primitive authority, and is in harmony with modern democratic tendencies. In regarding the teaching-elders and the ruling-elders as being on the same level of spiritual rank, the Presbyterian Church can claim New Testament sanction. But whether, in giving to lay-elders the same spiritual

authority as the pastors, Presbyterianism can claim similar sanction is at least doubtful. The election of elders is not by the vote of the whole membership, but by the minister and his colleagues of the Consistory or Church Council. They are not elected annually, but for life; the people have no direct representation. Barrow says of the Calvinistic Church, and the words are equally true of the Presbyterian, that the true laity get nothing but "the smoky, windy title of electing their ministers (as distinguished from the 'elders'), and not even a pretence of any further power or prerogative."

4. THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.

This Church was founded by the moderate party among the Brownists and Barrowists early in the seventeenth century. During the Commonwealth they rapidly spread through England. With their rivals, the Presbyterians, they suffered much after the Restoration. But after the Revolution in 1688 they struck out upon a line of speedy and permanent development. The term "Independent," by which these Churches were first known, indicated their ecclesiastical position. Each Church in point of management is independent of all other Churches, and equally independent of State control. Congregationalism differs from

Episcopacy, which maintains a distinction of *order* between clergy and laity. "The Church of England is a clergy-Church; its laity are merely receptive." Congregationalism differs also from Presbyterianism, which places the government of the Church in the hands of the eldership. The distinction so long maintained between the teaching and the ruling eldership in Presbyterianism must be given up, except as a matter of convenience. Congregationalism professes to be ruled by the whole brotherhood, that is, the government of each congregation is by *all the members* of that congregation. One fundamental principle is: "that in regard to questions of Church government and discipline coming before the Church, each several Church member possesses equal rights with every other member." The Congregational is a laity-Church; its ministers have no peculiar administrative functions.

5. THE METHODIST CHURCH.

No distinction can here be made between the different branches of the Methodist Church. Some of the secession Churches differ considerably from the parent communion in the form of government and the position of the laity. It is noteworthy, however, that the history of these

branch-Churches does not indicate any special advantages in administration and discipline excelling or even equalling the polity of the older Church. In considering the place and power of the laity in the Methodist Church, we must be understood to mean the Wesleyan Methodist Church. This is the most modern of all the great Churches. Presbyterianism and Congregationalism date from Reformation times. The Calvinistic Church was founded by Calvin in 1541. From Geneva, with some modifications, the Presbyterian form of Church government was introduced into Scotland by Knox about 1560, and became nationalised in 1592. The first organised Independent Church in England was founded in 1616. The earliest record of a regularly constituted Baptist Church states that it was formed in London in 1607. This was nearly one hundred years before Wesley was born, and the Methodist societies were not established till 1739. Being the latest great Church-organisation it will be interesting to study at slightly greater length the position it assigns to the laity.

(1) *The position of the laity is unique.*—Coming into existence so long after the older Nonconformist Churches, Methodism had an opportunity of selecting the excellencies and rejecting

the defects of their ecclesiastical polities. It differs from Episcopalianism in maintaining that "bishop" and "elder" are synonymous terms, and consequently there are two, not three, orders of the ministry. It differs from Presbyterianism in objecting to the Divine right of the eldership to exercise exclusive ecclesiastical authority. It differs from Congregationalism in entrusting the ruling power to Church officers and representatives, and not to the whole membership of the Church. Needless to say it also differs from Erastianism, which is lay-government pure and simple. The organisation of Methodism is sufficiently distinct from that of all other Churches to justify its independent existence. The development of Methodist polity has been toward Congregational democracy, but it borrowed, and has retained, too much from the ecclesiastical régime of Episcopacy.

a. The modern position of the laity is an outgrowth. Methodism has been slow in granting to the laity a fair recognition in the councils of the Church. Without entering upon details, this statement may be corroborated by a reference to the constitution of the three chief councils of Methodism. In 1750 the *Circuit Quarterly Meeting* took definite shape, but its constitution was not

defined till 1752. At first the lay element was very small, but now, of course, the lay members form the great majority. Not one of these, however, is a true circuit representative, for not one is elected by the voice of the whole membership. In 1801, lay representation was extended to *District Meetings* (now *Synods*). The Conference resolved: "That the Superintendent of every circuit shall invite the General Steward of his circuit to be present at the annual meeting of his District Committee during the settling of everything relating to the finances of the district; and every Circuit Steward shall accordingly have a right to be present and to advise at the settlement of all financial matters." Previous to 1801 the District Committee was composed of ministers, whose chief function was the consideration of special cases and the preparation of a report for the Conference. Not until 1878 did the laity sit in the *Annual Conference*. This was the greatest concession granted in the history of Methodism. It was, however, but the natural evolution of a tendency already known to Methodism. Laymen were already in the Circuit Quarterly Meetings and the District Synods; by what law, then, could they be excluded from the Conference? The question discussed in the Conference

of 1875 was inevitable, how to secure to the laity "a more direct, adequate, and formal participation in matters of administration not purely pastoral?"

β . The modern position of the laity is based upon New Testament precedent. Methodism fairly maintains the balance between "the unscriptural positions of hierarchical clericalism on the one hand, and anarchical Plymouth Brethrenism on the other."* It is almost equally removed from extreme Calvinistic - Presbyterianism on the one hand, and from modified Quakerism on the other. In Presbyterianism lay-power is retained by its constitution as the final appeal. This power is represented by the ruling-elders in the Presbyteries, Synods, and General Assemblies. "These presbyters—laymen in other respects, and representatives of the lay element—have a voice in matters which affect the ministerial function as such." In the Congregational system the power of the pastorate is reduced to a minimum compared with that of the laity. The exaltation of ruling-elders in Presbyterianism and the degradation of the pastorate in Congregationalism, are not supported by New Testament precedent. Methodism rightly maintains that the ministerial

* Gregory, *Script. Church Principl.*, page 247.

function or office is of Divine appointment, and is for economic reasons distinguished from the diaconal function or office. The Methodist doctrine is that the *Potestas Clavium*, or Power of the Keys, was committed by Christ to the Apostles, and through them to duly qualified and ordained ambassadors through all ages and countries. Hence, matters affecting the character and *locus standi* of ministers is reserved for consideration in the Pastoral Session of the Conference. Candidates for the office of the ministry are recommended by the Church in its Circuit and District Synods, but they are formally ordained by the hands of the pastorate. Quakers and Plymouth Brethren renounce the theory of a separated ministry, and rely for the spiritual edification of their congregations upon the Spirit's immediate *χαρίσματα*, or gifts of teaching. "Thus the ministry in their teaching is a perpetual creation instead of a separated order." Methodism can claim Scripture precedent for its doctrine of a separated ministry—a ministry which ordains its own successors, and which maintains the spiritual rule over the Churches. Methodism can also claim Scripture justification for its system of lay representation and co-operation in all matters which the New Testament entrusts to

the diaconate. The distinction, however, between presbyters and deacons is one of office, not of order; but the distinction of office has Divine sanction.

(2) *The position of the laity is open to criticism.*
—We have defended the Methodist Church in the *principle* underlying its doctrine respecting the clergy and the laity. We believe the principle to be Scripturally justified and economically sound. In the statements that follow there is no attempt to change the fundamental constitution of Methodism. We have no desire to see the parent Methodist Church transformed into an ill-defined ecclesiastical democracy. The Reform Movement, which resulted in the United Methodist Free Churches, taught us by a striking object-lesson some consequences of democracy which we truly deprecate. The Methodist form of Church government—by maintaining the pastoral authority as being final in all matters affecting ministerial status, and in pronouncing the Master's law on *proved transgressors*, and at the same time by respecting the rights of the laity in giving them a place in Synod and Conference—is on the whole, to our thinking, the most Scriptural, complete, and satisfactory of all the ecclesiastical polities of Christendom. Yet we are disposed to think that

Methodism has carried a sound principle to two correlative extremes.

a. The Autocracy of the Pastorate. The point questioned here is not the authority, but the *degree* of authority, that should be vested in the pastorate. If, as we have admitted, the pastors are the chief rulers in the Church, then they must possess sufficient power to rule efficiently; that is, to execute the law of the Church. Moreover, the efficient ruler must possess more authority than is required for the government of the Church in its normal condition. He must be vested with power to deal with extraordinary cases and conditions. The faithful are not restrained by righteous laws; their own good principles keep them in the right. Law simply permits them to live in that element in which they would live. Only the unrighteous rebel against just law, because it compels them to live in that element in which they would not be. "The law is not made for a righteous man,* but for the lawless and unruly." It is well, therefore, that the pastorate should be vested with power to suppress the lawless and anarchical elements in the Church. This is essential for the preservation of peace and prosperity. But whether the Methodist

* 1 Tim. 1, 9, *δικαίῳ νόμος οὐ κέεται* = the law lieth not upon the righteous.

polity is equally wise in the *degree* of authority entrusted to the pastorate is quite another question.

The Superintendent of a Methodist circuit may act despotically. In his official capacity, in relation to his colleagues, it is not quite correct to describe a Superintendent as *primus inter pares*, but rather as *Pontifex maximus*. Nearly every officer in Methodism must be nominated by the circuit Superintendent, and no scheme of aggressive Christian work can be launched without his approval. This possession of power is a snare to men of a certain mental and ethical type, and tempts them into an ecclesiastical diplomacy which is intolerable to sincere laymen, and subversive of the highest interests of the Church. It seems a defect in the economy of Methodism that every circuit enterprise, however wise and necessary in the view of the majority of members, may be thwarted or vetoed by one man, whose residence in the circuit is only temporary, and whose judgment must be always more or less fallible. It is true that Methodism has provided a series of checks to the abuse of a Superintendent's power, and the members have the right of appeal to Synod and Conference. The question here, however, is not the use or the abuse which

the pastorate makes of its authority. If Methodist ministers are wiser in practice than in theory, so much the better for the Church and so much the worse for its polity. We think the Methodist Church has reserved some power to the pastorate which the New Testament Church accorded to the laity. In the case of Matthias and of the seven deacons, "the initiative as regards choice lay with the members of the Christian community as a body."*

β. The Exclusion of the Members. It may be said that though the presiding minister *nominates* he does not *elect* circuit officers. This is true; but in *no case* is the electorate the whole Church. Each body of officers has power to elect its own successors and to fill up vacancies in its own ranks. Methodist elections often move in a circle. Nearly all officers nominated by the presiding minister are appointed by the vote of those who themselves were similarly nominated. The point we question here is not the system of election by majorities, nor the exclusion of the members from some official meetings, but the absolute lack of provision for submitting a *single nomination* or a *single question* to the whole membership of the Church. This is sometimes productive of dis-

* Bannerman, *Script. Doct. of the Church*, p. 538.

content, and is out of harmony with New Testament precedent and primitive Church usage. "On no point is the testimony of the patristic writers of the first three centuries more unanimous than on this, that from the time of the Apostles, the members of every Church had the right of a free choice—or, at the very least, a substantial voice—in the appointment of their office-bearers."*

What readjustments in Methodism would be necessary to secure *some direct representation* of the whole membership it is not our purpose to discuss. The desirability of some such readjustments is all that concerns us here. Methodists accept the monarchical rather than the republican type of Church government, and the suggestions made above are quite consistent with this form of administration. The Government of England is monarchical, but the election of Members of Parliament is by the whole enfranchised population. The monarchical Government of England is not weakened by becoming more and more democratic. Modern progress is towards democracy, only we must be careful lest democracy should spell anarchy. The State that guards most securely the prerogatives of its legislators,

* Bannerman, *Script. Doct. of the Church*, p. 538.

and protects most jealously the liberties of its subjects, will be the most truly progressive and prosperous State. And the Church that holds the balance most justly between the Scriptural rights of the clergy and the equally Divine rights of the laity will be *the* Church of the future.

VI.

CHURCH AND STATE.

CHURCH AND STATE.

PART I.

HISTORY OF THE ESTABLISHMENT.

IN one respect this is a political question, but Nonconformists are not responsible for the fact. It is not mainly with the political aspect of the subject that we purpose to deal, but chiefly with the religious problems involved. But why should Dissenters interfere with the status of a Church whose adherents are satisfied with the political alliance? We give the following summary answer: some of the points will be developed more fully as we proceed. (1) The Anglican Church is largely supported by endowments which belong to the whole nation; Nonconformists are responsible citizens, and therefore have a right to be heard in the distribution of national wealth. (2) If the Anglican be the national Church, Dissenters are by compact members of it, and therefore have a right to speak in the government of the Church. (3) The Reformed Church of England was esta-

blished as distinctively a Protestant Church, and as such has been maintained by the nation ; if the heads of the Church with the concurrence or connivance of Parliament permit a system of Romanising within its pale, all the subjects in these realms have an equal right to protest. (4) A State Church sets up distinctions, privileges, and monopolies which are subversive of justice and religious equality. (5) The Crown assumes responsibilities in connection with the doctrine and discipline of the Church, which derogate the supremacy of Christ and bind the consciences of men. (6) The Church must not take its model from political kingdoms, but political kingdoms are to get their pattern from the Church. (7) The genius of Christianity is faith in the Unseen, reliance upon spiritual force, and propagation through the persuasive passion of love ; not repose upon political buttresses and conquest through physical power. "Not as among the Jews and Gentiles shall it be among you."

I.—Types of Church and State Relationship.

One of the most difficult problems of the historian is to trace and define the exact relationship which has existed between the Church and the State through the centuries. In tracing the

barest outline we may indicate the following types:

1. MUTUAL EQUALITY.

From the very nature of things this position was of the most temporary character. It was attempted, however, at that point of Roman history when the ecclesiastical power rivalled the imperial. It was the period of transition when the Church was rising from subjection to the State to dominate princes and governments. The climax was reached on Christmas Day, 800, when Pope Leo III. crowned Charlemagne emperor of the revived Western Empire, or, as it was now called, the "Holy Roman Empire." This transaction indicated that these two parties intended to divide the government of the world between them. Whatever the Emperor did in political affairs the Pope would sanction, and whatever the Pope did in religious matters the Emperor would ratify. This strange compromise was a great failure; it was impossible to decide what powers were reserved to the Emperor, and what belonged to the Pope. Disputes soon arose and were interminable. But up to the beginning of the nineteenth century the mockery of the dual sovereignty, involved in this mutual-equality alliance, was kept

alive. In 1806, as a result of the mighty campaigns of Napoleon, the title was dropped, "and thus the 'Holy Roman Empire' came to an end a thousand and six years after the coronation of Charlemagne, and eighteen hundred and fifty-eight years after Cæsar had conquered at Pharsalia."

2. SUPREMACY OF THE CHURCH.

The Latin Church derived its ideal of government from the early Roman Empire. The magistrate was both ruler and priest. The sword gave him power over the material, and religion gave him dominion over the spiritual interests of men. The chief ruler was the high priest, hence the Emperor was *Pontifex Maximus*. The Emperors bore this title until the time of Theodosius the Christian (346-395). From this time the bishops of Rome gained greater influence in the State. Theodosius issued a decree which declared the Nicene Creed the only true and Catholic Confession. He summoned the Synod of Constantinople, which confirmed the Nicene Creed and added the clauses respecting the Holy Spirit. Leo I. (440-461) was not slow to take advantage of the Church's opportunity, and he was the first to assume officially the title of "Pope" or *Pontifex*

Maximus, in imitation of the Emperors who united and exercised civil and religious functions. The fall of the Roman Empire was one cause of the rise of the priestly empire. Upon the ruins of the old civilisation the Church built up a hierarchy, a scheme of doctrine and a form of power, which remained unshaken for more than a thousand years. It has always been the policy of the Latin Church to cultivate the assistance of the civil power. And ever since Constantine (306-337) declared Christianity the religion of the Roman Empire, the Church has employed the arm of the law to enforce her doctrines and polity. The ideal of the Roman Catholic Church is that the Pope should have universal dominion, not only over the Church, but over the temporal affairs of the nations, at least those kingdoms professing the Roman Catholic faith. This statement is abundantly illustrated in the history of Hildebrand (Pope Gregory VII., 1073-1085). By sheer determination and unscrupulous methods, he brought both Church and State to his feet. No incident is more humiliating than that of Henry IV. of Germany, clad in sackcloth, with bare feet, and ashes on his head, waiting three days in the courtyard at Canossa for the Pope's absolution. In those days the State was excluded from any

authority in ecclesiastical affairs. Neither Prince nor councillor could appoint to an ecclesiastical office, and the authority of the Vatican conclave was supreme. Innocent III. (1198-1216) was not satisfied with spiritual power, he attempted to render that power an instrument for the subjugation of Europe to a humiliating subserviency. The principle of the Papacy he expressed by a parallel already drawn by Gregory VII., that "as God created two luminaries, one superior for the day, and the other inferior for the night, which last owes its splendour entirely to the first, so He has disposed that the regal dignity should be but a reflection of the papal authority, and entirely subordinate to it."*

3. SUPREMACY OF THE STATE.

The interference of the civil power in matters of religion did not begin with Cæsar's Empire and the Romish Church. The ancient pagan princes "accounted it a most important part of their function to suppress all religions supposed to be false, and to uphold the religion supposed to be true. In the discharge of this supposed duty, their great instrument was the sword." In the early and middle ages, religion was the instrument

* Knight's *England*, Vol. II., p. 337.

by which some sovereigns endeavoured to bring both mind and body into subjection to their sway. It is even more true that during the same periods, the Popes, as we have seen, were using the civil power to extend the influence and authority of the Church. From Augustine of Canterbury to Henry VIII. England was dominated by the Pope of Rome, and the Church in England, as Dean Hook confesses, was "only a branch of the Church of Rome." The Reformation shifted the head of the Church from Rome to London, from the Pope to the King. Perhaps the nation did not act altogether unwisely in accepting the King as head of the Church. In the momentous crisis of throwing off the Roman yoke, nothing but the strongest authority could have saved the Church in England from hopeless confusion. But it never should have been a permanent arrangement. The subjection of the Church to the Crown was too extreme and abject. To make the civil court the final seat of authority in matters of doctrine and discipline was a violation of New Testament teaching and a negation of voluntary religious convictions. On this ground we contend that when the Church put her head under the heel of Henry VIII. she went out of the true Apostolical succession. The English Dissenters, by refusing

to submit to a State religion, remained in that succession, and they, not Episcopal Churchmen, are the most faithful and legitimate successors of the Apostles. After the Restoration the old Romish type of tyranny was again introduced. In 1662 the execrable Act of Uniformity was passed, which enjoined upon all ministers the use of the Book of Common Prayer on pain of forfeiture of their livings. Then followed one of the most glorious events in the history of England. Rather than violate the law of conscience and stifle the voice of religious liberty, two thousand heroic clergymen marched out of the Establishment in the name of God and freedom. These were the first *Nonconformists*. Among them were many cultured and godly men—John Howe, Baxter, Flavel, Philip Henry, and Bartholomew Wesley, the great-grandfather of the founder of Methodism. The word *Nonconformist* soon became of wider signification; it was applied to the members of all religious sects in England and Wales who were not members of the Church of England. Thus the word became synonymous with *Dissenters*. Strictly, a *Nonconformist* is one who refuses to conform to the doctrines and polity contained in the Book of Common Prayer; a *Dissenter* is one who dissents from a Church

established and endowed by law. The former has chiefly a religious and the latter chiefly a political basis. Hence the modern Free Churches are both nonconforming and dissenting Churches.

4. RECIPROCAL INDEPENDENCE OF CHURCH AND STATE.

This position is a *via media* between the two extremes—the supremacy of the Church as claimed by Romanists, and the supremacy of the State as accepted by Anglicans. Both are extremes, and extremes are always untenable. The former—the ideal of Romanism—has for centuries been the cause of perpetual conflicts, full of confusion and misery. It hopelessly failed, and it now stands in history as a ghastly spectre from the past. The latter—the ideal of the Reformed Churches—has proved ill-suited to the strongest demands of the Church, incapable of satisfying her deepest impulses, and suppressive of her spontaneous efforts. It has been “driven into much compromising, remodelling, and patching up, probably as a preliminary to its entire abandonment.” The position we advocate is equally opposed to the Erastian Broad Church theory, viz., that the Church is co-extensive with the State, the Church and the world are identical, and the clergy are

simply a branch of the civil service. This theory denies to the Church any power to make laws or decrees, or to inflict penalties of any kind; it relegates to the State supremacy in ecclesiastical as in all other causes. Consequently the Church has no right to exclude any one from its ordinances, or to inflict excommunication. The Free Churches, basing their belief upon New Testament precept and practice, maintain a very different view, and, in opposition to the above, this may be stated in a twofold form. (1) The New Testament differentiates between the Church and the world, the company of the *called out* and the *aliens* to the Christian commonwealth. These are represented as direct antagonists, between whom reconciliation can never be effected. "What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness, and what communion hath light with darkness?" (2) The New Testament enjoins upon Christians obedience to magistrates in civil and political affairs, but commands the Church to exercise autonomy in matters of doctrine and discipline. The writer to the Hebrews expressly commands the Christian community to obey the presidents of the Church: "Obey your leaders, and yield to them."*

* Heb. xiii. 17—*πέιθεσθε τοῖς ἡγουμένοις ὑμῶν καὶ ὑπέκχετε.*

The position of reciprocal independence of Church and State in practical form is best seen in the United States of America. The principle, however, was not carried across the Atlantic by the Puritans; they established a State-religion no less tyrannical than that left in their native country. The Free Churches of America are the natural results of a free people with free political institutions. In the Constitution of the Union the entire freedom of religion was secured by the provision that "Congress should make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." American and colonial dignitaries of the Anglican Church have frankly admitted that the conditions of an unestablished and unendowed Church are not "a disadvantage to the spiritual well-being and prosperity of the Church herself." Surely, then, the same conditions would not be injurious to the Church at home, where the adherents are so much more numerous and the resources so much greater than in the United States and the British colonies.

II.—The State-Church is Comparatively a Modern Invention.

The principle of a State-Church, as seen in the Episcopal Church of England and the Presbyterian

Church of Scotland, cannot claim the support of great antiquity. It is in some respects unlike all the relations between Church and State which existed before the Reformation.

1. NO TRUE ANALOGY IN THE HEBREW COMMONWEALTH.

The struggles of priests and prophets were not for the political establishment of religion. The priests wanted supreme power—a hierarchy to govern the nation. The prophets wanted, not a human monarchy to rule the Church, but a Theocracy—the government of both Church and State by God. Ideally there was to be no distinction between civil and religious institutions. God was King, Salem was His palace, and the Temple was His throne. The Church and State were so closely identified that sins against the one were sins against the other. The judge could be also priest, as in the case of Eli and Samuel. The government under the kings preserved the theocratic principle. The Lord revealed His purpose to the kings through prophets. All the affairs of the nation were still under direct Divine superintendence, and the kingdom prospered as it obeyed God. Under the Israelitish covenant Church and State were not two separate and

independent institutions, nor was one a branch of, and therefore subordinate to, the other. The two were blended in the theocracy, and equally governed "according to the word of the Lord."

It is important to emphasize our position in this connection. Both Romanists and Broad Churchmen attempt to justify their respective claims from the condition of affairs under the Jewish dispensation. The former extol the priesthood to a position of exaggerated authority; the latter extend the monarchy in a manner foreign to the later Scriptures. The reply to both is at hand. (1) The Jewish priests never had the power to change the public face of religion, much less to regulate purely secular affairs. This power was always vested in the king, who was supposed to represent God and enforce His statutes. Whatever was done in civil and ecclesiastical matters was consistently denoted as the deed of the king. The priests never possessed this authority, even in purely religious matters. This is a sufficient answer to Romanists who would base their doctrine of priesthood upon the Jewish hierarchy. This presentation of the position, however, may seem to support Hooker and later Broad Churchmen in their contention that the Church and State are co-extensive, and are rightly subject to the king as defender

and head. Our reply is based on Scripture. (2) The New Testament separates the Church from the State, and forbids the civil authority to interfere in its purely spiritual interests. Christ founded His Church upon "the apostles and prophets," not upon priests and kings. His people were *called out* from among the worldly; as citizens they were enjoined "to obey magistrates," as Christians they were "called unto liberty," and both relationships were expressed in the Apostolic injunction: "Fear God. Honour the king." The Society of Jesus was to be perpetuated by the force of persuasion, not by the power of the sword. The Christian Church, as a spiritual commonwealth, was not to be subject to the "kings of the Gentiles," but to those who by the Christian Society were appointed to rule. These were presbyters and deacons, the under-shepherds and overseers, Christ being the chief "Shepherd and Bishop" of souls.

2. NO PARALLEL IN THE STATES OF ANTIQUITY.

The religions of pagan States were essentially national. They formed an integral part of political institutions. Religion and politics could not be separate factors because the individual was not distinguished from society. Religion did not

appeal to man as man, it did not become incarnate in individual life. The laws of religion corresponded exactly with the laws of the State; they were formulated and administered by the same authority. The distinction between the spiritual and temporal was unknown to the nations of the ancient world. The unity of man and society was universally taken as the basis of all government. Conflict between Church and State was impossible; they had no separate claims, and consequently could not wrangle about them. In Greece and Rome the individual was absorbed in the State. The gods were tribal or national. Religion took the form which was ordered by the Senate, and not the form which resulted from the spontaneous worship of the individual soul. Man had a purely military and political value. Conscience had not yet emerged from the darkness of ancient despotism; man had not yet come to his true inheritance. Many centuries were yet to pass before there could be developed the differentiation of the individual from the multitude, and the claims of the conscience from the demands of the State. So in the early Saxon days of England. "The Church and the nation were absolutely the same; the king and his Witan dealt with ecclesiastical questions and disposed of ecclesiastical offices by

the same right by which they dealt with temporal questions and disposed of temporal offices. The Bishop and the Ealdorman, each appointed by the same authority, presided jointly in the assembly of the shire, and the assembly over which they presided dealt freely both with ecclesiastical and with temporal causes."* In Palestine and Greece, in Alexandria and Rome, in Scandinavia and Britain, the rights of man as an independent and responsible religious being were long suppressed under the systems of despotism and feudalism. But when man accepted and understood Christianity, he began to distinguish himself from society, and at the same time he began to distinguish religion from politics. With the origin of this distinction began the conflict between Church and State, conscience and law, and modern history is, in great part, the record of this struggle.

3. UNKNOWN TO MEDIÆVAL CHRISTIANITY.

No argument is necessary to show that the first congregations of Christians were entirely separate from political institutions. The early Christians were not only unestablished by the State, they were not even protected by it. They were

* Freeman, *Growth of the English Constitution*, p. 77.

maliciously attacked by enemies, and magistrates connived at the persecution. Indeed, many of the early massacres were instigated by the Emperors or their abettors, and perpetrated by the sword of State. The first general persecution of Christians under Nero at Rome in 64 affords an illustration. The Senate hated the Christian community, and longed for some ground upon which to convict and condemn the growing Church. The terrible fire which destroyed a large part of the imperial city gave the Emperor and his Senators the desired opportunity. Tacitus says that Nero falsely charged the Christians with the crime, and Juvenal tells of the horrors which followed :

At the stake they shine,
Who stand with throat transfixed and smoke and burn.

Attired as a charioteer, Nero drove about encouraging the persecutors, while his pagan subjects shouted with delight.*

As the Church survived each persecution and grew in spite of all opposition, it gradually gained more favour with the ruling classes. At first the Society of Jesus was composed almost entirely of plebeians, but some of the patrician families were early influenced by Christianity. Naturally these

* Uhlhorn, *Conflict of Christianity*, pp. 241-250.

nobles secured for the Church a better social and political standing. This process went on until the Church became as powerful as the State, and a compromise or alliance was made which, in some form, has remained to the present time. The important fact, however, for us to notice is that the Romish Church in the Middle Ages was never the willing tool of the State. The State was rather the convenient arm of the Church. "We must needs allow that if the Catholic Church have but too much employed the State for the realisation of her own ends, yet she has never allowed herself to be absorbed by the State. She has, indeed, very unfortunately, borrowed force and majesty therefrom; still more disastrously has she called the arms of flesh of the State to assist her own violent measures; but we must do her this justice, she has never known servitude, never given up her independence as the price of the favours shown her."*

4. PROPERLY DATES FROM THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

Until the Reformation the Church never recognised the State as its head. But when the great separation from Roman Catholicism took place

* Vinet, *Outlines of Philosophy and Literature*, pp. 351, 352.

the Reformed communities, having lost their former papal head, were necessitated to find another. There were two alternatives before them, either to accept the firm protection of the Government, with the sovereign as their head, or to throw themselves upon the uncertain democracy, with the majority as sovereign and head. The Reformed Churches on the Continent and in England preferred the former alternative, virtually making the king a bishop, and the Parliament an ecclesiastical synod. No doubt the view of both Luther and Calvin was that the Church should stand free and self-governing under the protection of the State. But this view was impracticable at the time. The Reformers had broken from the old Church-moorings, and in self-defence they were compelled to seek the protection of the secular authority. They could not entrust their cause to the people: the consequences of such a course were strikingly revealed in the disastrous Peasants' War which spread over Germany in 1525. They had but one course open, viz., to appeal to the civil ruler. This inevitably meant that the maxim, *Cujus regio, ejus religio* ("Whoever rules in the State has the say in religion"), would become the established rule. The Reformation took place in England in a

manner somewhat different from that on the Continent. In Germany it began from below—the people; in England it started from above—the king. But in both cases the supremacy of the State was firmly established as the principle of the relation between Church and State.

Since the sixteenth century various theories of State-religion have been advocated. Hobbes and Hume, following Spinoza, relegated religion to the civil government. The practical issue of their teaching would enslave the Church in a materialistic Erastianism. It is not without significance that materialists and fatalists have generally supported a State religion, no doubt from economic and utilitarian principles. But any political attempt to nationalise religion ignores the fundamental duality of man and society. To establish and endow a system of national religion is to affix to the spiritual needs of man the seal of spiritual death. Lamennais, the celebrated French writer on religion and politics, started as an Ultramontanist, but afterwards became a political democrat and a religious socialist. To secure the perfect freedom of religion he demanded to have it separated from the State and rebuilt on completely democratic principles. He wavered between according to the Church the support

of the State and submitting religion to the support of the people. Both alternatives were wrong in the theory of Lamennais. The Church should not be governed by the secular authority, and no particular system of doctrine and polity should be endowed by the State. Nor should the Church entrust the sacred interests of religion to the caprice of a promiscuous majority of the people.

III.—Inconsistencies of Protestantism in Accepting State-Control.

1. IT VIOLATED A PRINCIPLE WHICH GAVE IT MOMENTUM.

We have shown that the rights of the individual were not recognised in ancient times, and the demands of the conscience were not respected in Roman Catholic States. The individual had a value only as a social and military factor; he was expected to surrender his life for the protection of the Empire. And the soul was an ecclesiastical commodity to be bought and sold by the emissaries of the Vatican. The principle of the Reformation was to free the individual from State slavery and to liberate the conscience from religious tyranny. Protestantism professed to consecrate the principle of individuality, and

pledged itself to a religious republic. Its loudest voice was in defence of liberty. But, when the Reformed Churches threw off an ecclesiastical yoke and accepted a legal bondage, they infringed and degraded a fundamental principle on the very threshold of announcing it. In submitting to the secular prince as head of the Church, Protestantism fell back upon a system which led it to separate from Romanism. The Romish hierarchy was "massive, inarticulate, material, dead," and the Reformers refused to yield their consciences to this lifeless and corrupt ecclesiastical unity. Protestantism promised to open a channel in which the individuality of soul and reason, oppressed under the accumulated prejudices of ages, might go forth in unfettered spiritual freedom. The Reformation awakened the soul to a sense of its personality and individual responsibility, and consequently it was a revolt against the ecclesiastical and doctrinal bondage of the papal *régime*. But, in submitting the creed and discipline of the Church to the State, Protestantism re-enslaved the individual conscience which it professed to liberate. If the unity of ecclesiasticism could not supply the soul with spiritual food, how could the unity of the State meet the demand? Surely there is as much

religion in an ecclesiastical system as in a political! Each alternative is inconsistent with the basal principle of Protestantism. Probably, of the two evils, the Reformers chose the lesser, inasmuch as ecclesiastical tyranny is worse than political.

2. IT IGNORED ITS DIVINE CREDENTIALS.

The Church should represent on earth the triumph of spirit over matter, the independence of the individual in religious convictions. Unless the Church can say, "My kingdom is not of this world," it is not a faithful embodiment of Christ's teaching. The office of the Church is to ennoble life, beginning with the individual and permeating all society. The Church is to leaven the State, not to be governed by it; the Church is a State within a State—a true *imperium in imperio*—not antagonistic, but seeking its highest good. But when the secular State usurps authority over the spiritual State, there follows a weakening of religious convictions, a deadening of spiritual needs, a stifling of conscience, and a distaste for worship. Such must be the condition of religion when it surrenders its Divine independence. The essential credential of the Church is that the Holy Spirit, acting directly upon the

individual soul, will direct the life into Truth. In the case of a State Church the secular authority undertakes to decide what the members shall believe. Mark the anomaly. The State restraining individuality in the sphere where individuality ought to triumph; an essentially secular authority ordering an essentially spiritual society; law regulating mind; matter ruling spirit. This violation of New Testament ideas involved in a State Church means that religion is regarded as a collective affair, that the nation, as such, has a religion, that spiritual and temporal interests run parallel, that worship is part of the civil service, that men must adhere to the official religion, and, *volens volens*, support the doctrinal formulas and ecclesiastical polity promulgated by the State. All this is false, palpably and ignominiously false.

Strictly speaking, the State has not, and cannot establish *religion*; it is only the phantom and form that is established. Religion is a matter of the inner life, and is beyond the jurisdiction of magistrates. The State may regulate the forms in which the inner life shall express itself. Even this is unnatural and irrational. Religion, for its true development, must have freedom to express itself according to the dictates of an enlightened conscience. The duty of the State is not even to

regulate the forms of religious opinions, but so to protect the liberty of all religions that each shall have free expression without infringing upon the rights of the rest.

3. IT INEVITABLY ADOPTED A PERSECUTING ATTITUDE.

The history of Christianity has been one of incessant conflict. This conflict has arisen from either necessary antagonism to, or unholy alliance with, the civil power. "All the horrors in the history of religious persecution, which have done so much to make the history of religion itself appear at times more like a piece of history from the infernal regions than like anything human, must be traced to this renewed confederacy between the priest and the magistrate. Without that, not a fact in the long story of those evil deeds would have cast its disgrace upon our faith."* The horrors of religious persecution on the Continent were repeated in England in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The compulsory submission to the Book of Common Prayer in the reign of Edward VI. and Elizabeth was an act of great injustice to Dissenters. But the imposition of the Solemn League and

* Vaughan, *English Nonconformity*, p. 25.

Covenant in the time of Cromwell was no less an injustice to Episcopalians. History shows that any religious system that gains political ascendancy becomes dogmatical and tyrannical. And there is nothing more terrible in the world than the tyranny of dogmatism. "Every religion protected from without will persecute, and persecute, too, for an iota of theology, an atom of metaphysics." The great revolutions of Europe may be traced to the unscriptural relations between the two inherently separate institutions of Church and State. By allowing the physical power of the State to supplant the spiritual authority of the Church, both institutions have been shamefully deluded and perverted. When the civil power interferes with ecclesiastical matters, is it from conviction? When the judicial Bench punishes for some non-conformity to Church rubric, is it from a sense of religious justice? When the State manifests an utter indifference in respect to creed and practice, is it a worthy head of the Church? "To protect without conviction is hypocrisy; to persecute without conviction is to join violence to hypocrisy; to carry on a fanatical course of action in a spirit of indifference is the part of a shameless Machiavellianism. Now, how many times have Governments

presented us with this spectacle? or, rather, where is it that they have not presented it?"

Why, then, do men, even the irreligious, maintain so strenuously an established religion? Because it is an attempt to fill up a vacant place in the life. It is an inalienable element in man's nature that he should possess religion or its form. Multitudes want *a* religion, but not *the* religion. The most convenient method of escaping *the* religion of Christ is to support *a* religion of the State. Hence, materialists, sceptics, and free-thinkers of every school will often defend a State-Church. Sometimes they will even join bigoted ecclesiastics in persecuting those whose consciences refuse to submit and subscribe to Articles of Religion whose chief authority is the law of the land.

4. ITS UNIFORMITY CHECKS SPONTANEITY.

There are two things respecting great ideas and reforms: first, they originate in the individual, not in the collective mind; and second, they originate in a man's mind, "he knoweth not how." Religion, like all great movements, must begin with the individual and gradually spread through society. It is here we discover one defect of socialism. It proposes to do in the mass what can be done only in the individual. It regards

society as antecedent to ideas and convictions, and the collective mind is supposed to impart inspiration to the particular. This is precisely the principle involved in a State-religion. When the Church in England transferred its head from Pope Clement VII. to Henry VIII., "the Church became a mere department of his Government, a mechanical apparatus, by which he proposed to instil quietness, submissiveness, industry, and good morals in general, into his subjects, just as he distilled money from them by means of the taxing machine."* A Church so constituted is necessarily dogmatic; it cannot be indefinite, colourless, all-comprehensive. To have an establishment, *something* must be established. The very statement of the case changes the problem from the abstract to the concrete, from general to particular, and from negative to positive. To conform to what is established may involve a violation of personal convictions; to refuse to conform involves the ostracism of the nonconforming parties. Christianity is a living organism, the characteristic of life is growth, and to attain its highest form growth must be free. Protestantism, by accepting State-control, checked spiritual development by forfeiting the essential spontaneity.

* Schaff-Herzog, *Encycl.*, art. *Church and State*, Vol. I., p. 479.

VII.

CHURCH AND STATE.

CHURCH AND STATE.

PART II.

THE RATIONALE OF DISESTABLISHMENT.

IN the foregoing Lecture we have given some account of the history of the relation between Church and State. The alliance entered into in the sixteenth century was, perhaps, an inevitable arrangement at that period, and a natural phase in the evolution of the Christian Church. "No spiritual principle is ever so new, and therefore so alien to its environment, as at first it appears to be. A new idea can only reveal itself in the fulness of time, as the result of a process of history which has been preparing the minds of men for its reception. Hence the character of the civilisation amid which it presents itself can never be altogether unfavourable to it. It would not succeed at all, unless there was something in the spirit of the time which affected even its opponents and weakened their resistance."* In the light of

* Caird, *The Evolution of Religion*, Vol. II., pp. 251, 252.

this philosophical principle we must regard the legal establishment of religion in the sixteenth century as not absolutely an enforced and unnatural development. In the light of the same principle we now proceed to show that the spirit of the age—the environment—is no longer favourable to the maintenance of religion by law, that the genius of spirituality is to grow spontaneously from within, and not to be moulded by mechanical means from without.

I.—Permanent State-Religion is an Impossibility.

1. CONSCIENCE IS AWAKENING TO ITS OWN INDEPENDENCE.

In ancient times, as we have seen, there was a collective faith, a religion of the masses. Men were conscious of neither belief nor unbelief; they simply accepted what was provided. They no more dreamed of departing from the national gods than of violating the national laws. They were blindly led or driven with the multitude at the caprice of king and Senate. This is largely the case to-day in Roman Catholic countries, where the people suffer themselves to be ruled by a subtle priesthood. It is so in England in the case of all who take their religious opinions from

the State. But a tremendous transformation is now passing over the religious world, the issues of which cannot be calculated. The mighty investigations in science and philosophy are pressing into the theological domain. Nothing can now be taken for granted, not even Christianity. The number of so-called orthodox believers is becoming less, indeed there are comparatively few unqualified believers. Faith is no longer a legal commodity, and religion can no more be reckoned among the exigencies of political favour. The State can no more formulate a man's religious creed, because he has been enfranchised to think for himself. And with freedom of thought there must be liberty to enjoy religious convictions. The State has two alternatives: (1) Either to respect every man's religion by establishing it by law; in this case there would be as many establishments as there are religious opinions. (2) Or to respect every man's religion by disestablishing it; in this case there would be legal impartiality and religious equality. The former alternative is philosophically absurd and practically impossible; the latter is reasonable and inevitable.

The wave of Disestablishment has been moving slowly, yet its movement shows that public opinion is accumulating on its side. In 1869 the

Protestant Episcopal Church in Ireland was dis-established. The severance from the State has been an unspeakable blessing to Protestantism in that country. Wales has repeatedly put forth a plea that its Church should be liberated from alliance with the State. The vast majority of the people are with the Free Churches; public opinion cannot allow these to suffer injustice much longer. Scotland presents the strangest anomaly of the kind to be found. There are three Presbyterian Churches, the same in doctrine and polity, yet one is established and endowed, while the other two are allowed to exist as they are best able.* In the land beyond the Tweed public opinion must shortly remove the one barrier to a united and aggressive Presbyterianism. England will be the last to yield to the law of religious freedom and equality. There is an ancient conservatism, encircled with wealth, prestige, and power, which reluctantly parts with the smallest fraction of inherited privilege, custom, right, or authority.

2. SECULAR CONTROL IS ANTAGONISTIC TO THE AGGRESSIVE SPIRIT OF CHRISTIANITY.

No fact in the New Testament is more con-

* While these pages are going through the press the Free and the United Presbyterian Churches are consummating a union.

spicuous than the free life of the Spirit of God breaking through all conventional barriers and finding a home in a sphere from which the secular power would exclude it. The Christian community is to wage a continuous warfare; it is creative, aggressive, conquering. Its mission is to overthrow every establishment of evil, to disturb every false peace, and to dethrone every idolatrous ruler. This holy purpose it cannot accomplish in league with the secular authority. Of necessity it must sometimes come into conflict with the civil Government. There are times when it is forced to fight against the injustices of the State. This cannot be consistently done while Church and State are allied. The alliance, therefore, can only be maintained while the Church remains in a state of spiritual torpor, or cares only for the ceremonial wrappings of religion. Immediately the Church realises her true mission of evangelising the masses, the clinging to external forms will be relaxed, and the connection with the State will lose its glamour. The sections of Christendom which have made greatest progress during the last century have been the free sections. The gratifying progress of the Anglican Episcopal Church during the past twenty-five years has been due, not to the State-alliance, but

to the Christian zeal of some members, which asserts an independence in spite of the Establishment. The Church of Christ is to conquer the world, not by the force of arms, for "we do not war according to the flesh (for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but mighty before God to the casting down of strongholds)." The course of the free Spirit of life will not follow mechanical grooves, nor be restricted within stereotyped boundaries. Wherever the attempt has been made to limit the operations of the Spirit to institutions, establishments, and well-arranged mechanism, the Divine life has invariably been found to languish and decay. In the New Testament Church the *χαρίσματα* ("grace-gifts") were bestowed, not according to human arrangements, but in accordance with the self-determining action of the Holy Spirit: "dividing to each one severally even as He will." There was no prescribed form for the individual, and no contrivance of the State to secure the choicest gifts of God. "Man's highest attainment was accomplished dynamically, not mechanically." This teaching raises the problem of a State-Church from a mere ecclesiastical platform to a supreme moral issue. It is not a question of expediency of organisation, but of faithfulness to Divine commands. A State-

controlled Church is a violation of the genius and spirit of Christianity.

3. AN ESTABLISHED AND ENDOWED CHURCH PREVENTS NATIONAL UNITY AND RELIGIOUS EQUALITY.

The principle of mediæval feudalism was inequality. We have inherited certain class distinctions and privileges of caste. But a great turn has taken place in the current of civilisation. Progress is now based upon the principle of national unity and the equality of all citizens in the eye of the law. The day of privilege is passing, the day of equality of opportunity is dawning. The idea of national unity and of the equal rights of all has taken possession of the mind and has become an irresistible law of nature. The principle of inequality is harmful to both the privileged and the oppressed parties. The one is certain to be arrogant and persecuting, and the other is certain to be chagrined and envious. Nothing less than a miracle can prevent pride on the one side and revolt on the other. What is the secret of this division of parties? Not theological opinion, not social status, not intellectual acquirements. These differences exist among Nonconformists, but without producing similar effects. The real difference is the Establishment—one

section of the religious community exalted by Parliament to the dignity of a State-Church, with distinguished patronage and lavish endowments. Let us summarise the injustices involved. (1) Special sanction and privileges are given by the State to one Church, instead of dealing impartially with all Churches. (2) The State-Church is supported by means of property which was originally intended for the benefit of the whole community. (3) By giving bishops seats in the House of Lords all progressive and Free Church measures are handicapped, because these spiritual lords almost invariably vote against measures of reform. (4) The cathedrals are national edifices, but Non-conformist ministers cannot officiate in them, nor take part in any great national religious observance or ceremony. (5) The Establishment gives the Episcopal clergy the practical monopoly of masterships of public schools, and the chaplaincies of institutions under Government control. (6) The State-Church system has the effect, in thousands of parishes, of compelling all Non-conformist children to attend Church of England schools; no other public elementary schools being allowed to exist.*

* *Vide* Tract published by the Liberation Society, "Establishment and Disestablishment."

While these injustices remain the establishment of religion by law will continue a bar to national unity and a peril to the commonwealth. Let the Episcopal branch of the Protestant Church in England be disentangled from State control, and these evils would altogether disappear, or, at least, be reduced to insignificant proportions. Slowly the State has conceded a few of the rights of Nonconformists. These concessions began with the Toleration Act of 1688, which granted liberty of worship to all Nonconformists excepting Roman Catholics and Unitarians. In 1778 the Act was extended to Roman Catholics, and in 1813 to Unitarians. The repeal of the Test Act and Corporation Act, in 1828, gave Dissenters access to public offices and to Parliament. The Registration and Marriage Acts of 1836, 1837, and 1844, made the baptisms and marriages performed by Nonconformist ministers valid before the law. In 1854 the Reform Bill opened the universities of Oxford and Cambridge to Dissenters. In 1868 Church rates were abolished. The Education Act of 1870 provided for the establishment of Board Schools, supported by State aid under popular management. The Burial Laws Amendment Act of 1880 gave the right to Nonconformists to conduct their own burial

services in churchyards. The new Marriage Act of 1898 disposed of the necessary attendance of registrars at Nonconformist marriages. Should the Free Churches be satisfied with these concessions? Not for a moment. Such rights and privileges as they have secured are the results of their own determination, not the good-will of their opponents. The root-evil still remains, and Nonconformists will not be satisfied till this is destroyed. We have attacked and demolished some of the outworks of the religious Establishment, we intend to press into the very citadel and raze the State Church fabric to the ground.

4. THE STATE CHURCH MUST ULTIMATELY DECIDE BETWEEN IDENTITY AND SEPARATION.

The conclusion here reached is the logical sequence of the former sections. The pagan state was capable of absorbing the whole man, the individual was not recognised, and conscience had not awakened. Religion entered naturally into the State, or rather was included in the national programme. The nation had a religion, not the individual. But this identity of Church and State became impossible when conscience discovered itself and man realised his individuality. The pagan cult provided for the protection of society

against the individual ; modern law is supposed to provide for the protection of each against each, and of one against all. This is one distinctly Christian feature of our modern civilisation. The distinction here involved, viz., between the individual and the mass, the sacred and the secular, spirit and matter, has already taken effect *morally*. The partisans of a State religion are compelled to admit the distinction between the spiritual and temporal interests of life. The vehicle of the one can never again become the vehicle of the other. The identity of religious and civil laws is possible under two conditions : (1) A state of paganism, in which the individual is not differentiated from society ; (2) A state of perfection, in which all shall know the Lord, "from the least to the greatest." Happily, we have left the former state some centuries behind ; unhappily, the latter is immeasurably beyond us.

If identity be impossible, what is the alternative ? The only justifiable course, it seems to us, is separation. Some of the old High Church school persist in advocating a middle course called *union*. The attempts to unite Church and State have resulted in much theological conflict and great spiritual paralysis. The so-called union is a mere chimera. Certain chemical elements

will not unite to form a compound—there is no chemical affinity. Church and State, religion and politics, spirit and matter, naturally repel, and not attract, each other. They cannot be united, to form a new compound, they lack inherent reciprocity; in a word, there is no spiritual affinity. The relation of Church and State, therefore, is not a union which is spontaneous and natural, but an alliance which is forced and disastrous. The State is governed by the majority, and the majority is the world. In so far as the Church is under State control, it, too, is governed by the majority—that is, by the world. This compels us to view the alliance not merely from a legal standpoint, but from a moral point of view. The Apostolic command applies as much to the collective Church as to the individual member: “Be not unequally yoked with unbelievers; for what fellowship have righteousness and iniquity? or what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what portion hath a believer with an unbeliever? And what agreement hath a temple of God with idols?”

II.—Advantages of Disestablishment.

It is no part of our purpose to discuss the methods by which Disestablishment is to be

accomplished. This belongs to the lawyer and politician, not to the historian and theologian. Our object is to present in the clearest manner possible the *rationale* of Disestablishment. It will help to clear the ground if in this place we briefly state some of the reforms asked for, and some of the remedies brought forward.

(1) *Reforms Demanded.*—*a.* That Convocation be reconstituted, making it representative by the addition of the laity. *β.* That Convocation have administrative, as well as legislative power; power to formulate reforms and to enforce them in the Church. *γ.* That new dioceses be created, with a corresponding number of bishops at greatly reduced stipends. *δ.* That the choice of bishops be by the Church or Convocation, so abolishing the system of *Congé d'elire*. *ε.* That the laity have a voice in the appointment of the clergy, so destroying the evils of patronage and the traffic in livings. *ζ.* That the entrance to the ministry be better guarded, and adequate means be found for the removal of unfit ministers. *η.* That the bishops be no longer *ex-officio* members of the House of Lords. *θ.* That the Cathedral system be reorganised upon some utilitarian principle. *ι.* That ecclesiastical revenues be redistributed so that curates receive

adequate remuneration, and a competency provided for infirm and aged ministers. κ . That small adjacent parishes be united and the clergy relieved of some of the liabilities involved in ecclesiastical fees, rates, dilapidation of parsonages, &c. λ . That the Act of Submission of the Clergy be repealed, also the Act of Uniformity. μ . That the Book of Common Prayer be revised, so as to make it definitely Protestant. ν . That the Church have complete autonomy in matters of doctrine and discipline. All these and other reforms would be included in, or would follow from, a comprehensive measure for the Disestablishment and Disendowment of the Protestant Episcopal Church of England.

(2) *Remedies Suggested*.—They are of three types. *a*. That of the “Church Defence Institution.” This society was founded in 1859 “to assist in maintaining a national recognition of Christianity, and in conserving the endowments provided by successive generations for the worship of Almighty God.” The members of this institution aver *totidem verbis* that they are determined to defend and perpetuate the State Church as established and defined at the Reformation. This is practically the position of the so-called High Churchmen.

β. That of the "Church Reform League." This society attempts a moderate, but rather ideal, state of ecclesiastical affairs. It does not ask that the alliance of Church and State should be annulled, but "that such alliance shall leave the Church free to manage her own affairs in her own way, subject only to the legitimate veto of Parliament on all matters relating to the civil rights of our citizens." This idea, however pleasing to Episcopalians, would intensify the injustice of the State toward Nonconformity. There is a novel audacity in asking for all the privileges of a free institution, while retaining all the endowments and status of a National Church. But the principle has now taken deep root in the English mind that all institutions supported by public money shall be under popular control. A State-supported Church can no more claim to govern itself than the Army or any branch of the civil service can claim to govern themselves. The object of the "Church Reform League" is in harmony with the view of the so-called Anglo-Catholics.

γ. That of the "Liberation Society." The object of this Association is expressed in its fuller title: "Society for the Liberation of Religion from State-Patronage and Control." This is the one "short cut" to reform, the real way to the

solution of our present ecclesiastical and religious problems. There is a growing sentiment of justice and equality in our midst which will be satisfied only with the Disestablishment and Disendowment of the Protestant Episcopal Church of England. That Church must occupy the same legal position as other religious bodies, and acquire the same right of self-government as they have always possessed. Then will religion in England be raised from a position of ecclesiastical feudalism and State-caste to a position of Christian liberty, equality, fraternity.

I. ADVANTAGES TO THE STATE.

(1) *The constitution of Parliament renders it unfit to control the doctrine and discipline of the Church.*—The Anglican Church is supposed to be Protestant, Trinitarian, and Episcopal. How does the Government harmonise with this description? In the Legislature there are Presbyterians, Independents, Unitarians, Jews, Roman Catholics, and even avowed unbelievers. Yet all these possess equal rights, duties, and responsibilities in regard to the government of the Established Church; the situation is so grotesquely anomalous that honest statesmen are disgusted, and conscientious Churchmen are humiliated. The unity and zeal

necessary for ecclesiastical reform cannot exist in such a religiously promiscuous company. Archbishop Magee said: "The Cabinet is sick of all Church questions, and hates the very idea of Church Bills in the Commons. The result of this false conservatism will be ecclesiastical revolution." The truth of this statement has been painfully demonstrated during the last quarter of a century. The fear of "ecclesiastical revolution" has rendered nearly all attempts at reform feeble and abortive. Forty-five years ago Mr. Gladstone expressed to Bishop Wilberforce a principle, which is becoming more and more apparent, that "no good to the Church will come from Parliament; it must be developed from within." Moreover, Parliament is overwhelmed with the secular affairs of the Empire; it has no time to waste in sectarian controversy. The business of the State should be conducted upon broad Christian principles, not upon narrow Denominational lines.

(2) *Disestablishment would remove one of the chief sources of national discord.*—The late Dean Vaughan deprecated Disestablishment, not so much for the sake of the Church, but chiefly for the sake of the State. He imagined serious loss to our political and imperial life by Parliament renouncing its control of the Church. But surely

the Disestablishment of a State Church is not synonymous with the destruction of religion in the State. Let those who question this statement appeal for proof to America and the British colonies. Probably the chief advantage to the State that would result from Disestablishment would be greater national unity. Free religions never create different nations ; it is only when the State patronises and extols, flatters and endows one Church section to the disadvantage and persecution of other sections that difficulties arise. All the disagreeable ecclesiastical problems which agitate the minds and waste the time of Members of Parliament have been occasioned by the State itself. The Government cannot maintain the control and headship of the Church, and at the same time shirk the responsibilities of the position. Let Parliament, once for all, throw off these responsibilities by allowing autonomy to the Church in doctrine and discipline, and it will no more be bewildered and distracted with bigoted bishops and religious partisans. Again, it is notorious that many measures which pass the House of Commons—the representative House of the nation—are distorted, invalidated, or even rejected by the House of Lords—the unrepresentative House of the nation. And it is proverbial

that the most unprogressive and reactionary section of the House of Lords is the Episcopal, or ecclesiastical section. It would greatly facilitate legislation if the bishops—who pretend to be the only true successors of the Apostles—would give less time to politics and more time to their dioceses. Let them become in the true sense “overseers” of the Church after the Apostolic and primitive model. It would perhaps be well for the Church of Christ to be directly and officially represented in Parliament; this could be done by each branch of the Church electing its own representative.

2. ADVANTAGES TO THE CHURCH.

(1) *The Church would have the power of self-reform.*—At present Church officials are bound hand and foot. It is so inevitably. An Established Church must be based upon a national authority. The only national authority acknowledged in England is the Crown and Parliament. This was distinctly recognised at the time of the Reformation. There are three historical and political pillars upon which the Established Church is reared: *a.* The Act of the Submission of the Clergy. This Act was passed in the reign of Henry VIII., and by it the government of the Church was transferred from

ecclesiastical to secular authority, and the allegiance of the clergy was transferred from the Pope to the King. β . The Act of the Supremacy of the Crown. This, too, was passed in the time of Henry VIII., and ratified in the reign of Elizabeth. By this Act the right of the laity, as represented by Parliament, to govern the Church was established. γ . The different Acts of Uniformity of Public Worship and Doctrine. These were passed, with slight variations, in the reigns of Henry VIII., Edward VI., Elizabeth, and Charles II. By these Acts the Liturgy and Articles, Discipline and Practice, which bound bishop and clergy, were defined. These statutes prove conclusively that under present legal restraints ecclesiastical dignitaries are absolutely powerless to reform the Church. The bishops have no authority to depart from the political bond, and Convocation cannot change an iota of the conditions upon which the clergy hold their livings.

(2) *The spiritual dynamic of the Church would be greatly increased.*—When a religion declares that it needs the support of the Government it portrays not only its own inherent weakness, but also its lack of faith in God. It is asked what the Church would have done without the aid of the State. We

answer, all the good it has done with that aid, *and much more*. If challenged for proof, we refer to the indisputable facts of history. The early Church was not allied with the State, was it a lifeless, inefficient institution? Let it never be forgotten that the Church as a pure spiritual force conquered the Roman world. That was the greatest triumph of the Church since the day of Pentecost. That triumph was achieved by sheer moral influence, against strong prejudice and political intrigue. If the Church, as a free and independent religious institution, could accomplish such a result in the fourth century, what might it have accomplished through the succeeding centuries, if it had not been checkmated at every turn by political alliances and secular complications? We do not here approve of the methods or results of Constantine's decrees in favour of Christianity. But the symbol of his religious reforms must still be the inspiration of the Church. He tells us one day when the sun was declining in the West, he saw a bright cross upon the sun, and over it the inscription in letters of light: ΤΟΥΤΩ ΝΙΚΑ ("By this sign conquer"). The true power of the Church is the living presence of the Crucified Christ, not the cold and blighting interference of an Act of Parliament. When

Christianity became the religion of the Roman Empire and took the place in the life of the State formerly occupied by heathenism, it became corrupted and lost much of its Apostolic purity and zeal. To regain its primitive sanctity and power, it must renounce the unholy alliance with the world. The spiritually enfranchised must not be entangled with the spiritually unenfranchised. "Come ye out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord."

The demand for religion is not first intellectual, but psychical. But whatever is a demand of the soul must be so guarded as to command the respect of the intellect. No man will do homage to religion if we "by a false combination make him view religion as a political machine or sacerdotal manoeuvre." The power of the Church separated from the State will not become less, but *different*. It will not be constraint, but persuasion. That which gives Christianity strength and victory is not arbitrary conformity to certain beliefs and ritual, but the manner in which it presents the truth. Truth needs not the support of a magistrate, it only needs faithful presentation. Men are not made Christians by Act of Parliament, but by conversion through repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Truth, pre-

sented by the Church, as an independent persuasive force, will be immeasurably more likely to reach the hearts and appeal to the minds of men, than when conjoined with the political *régime*.

Finally, the Church is a brotherhood of equals. Jewish priestcraft and Gentile tyranny are alike foreign to its spirit and mission. "Ye know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. Not so shall it be among you." The Church, as a spiritual institution, recognises no king but Christ. Gaspard de Coligny avouched the Protestant cause and became head of the Huguenot party in France during the religious struggles of the sixteenth century. He distinguished himself under Francis I., and Henry II. made him admiral of France. In 1557 he defended the little town of Saint Quentin against the Spaniards. One day the enemy shot over the broken ramparts an arrow bearing a strip of parchment with an inscription promising the inhabitants, if they would surrender, their lives and goods. In reply Coligny took a strip of parchment and wrote upon it, *Regem habemus* ("We have a king"); he fixed it to a spear and threw it into the camp of the enemy. This is our reply to Romanists who ask us to surrender our

religious convictions to the Pope, and to Anglicans who ask us to surrender our consciences to the Crown. *Regem habemus*—We have a King: “for One is our Master, even Christ.”

VIII.

THE IDEA OF PROGRESS.

THE IDEA OF PROGRESS.

THE superstitions respecting sea-monsters are among the most fascinating and tenacious. The naturalist Denis de Montfort affirmed that in the Northern seas there were cuttle-fish compared with which whales were mere pigmies. So prodigious were their dimensions that when motionless and half out of the water their bodies looked like small islands in the midst of the ocean. The old Scandinavian chronicles say that sailors, deceived by these treacherous island-animals, have been known to anchor their vessels on the flanks of these monsters, land, kindle a fire and cook their food on the bodies of these immense creatures. Modern readers smile at the absurdity of these old superstitions. Natural history has rid itself of these monstrosities and fantastic inventions of the early and middle centuries. The same shedding of mythical accretions has taken place in almost every branch of science and literature. Religious literature, however, has shown

a painful conservatism in this respect. The Church still perpetuates a number of ancient fables, and Christian theology retains a considerable modicum of mediæval superstition. Christendom needs a mighty ecclesiastical and doctrinal ecdysis. In speaking of the Idea of Progress, we first consider some General Grounds, and next some Particular Laws.

I.—General Grounds.

1. PROGRESS IS NOT IN A STRAIGHT LINE.

Herbert Spencer says that rhythm, or undulation, is a law of motion. Motion is not in a straight line, it ascends and descends. Motion would be in a uniform straight line if there were only a single body in space impelled by a single force. In this case there would be no variety in life and evolution would be impossible. There are contrary forces in the universe, and motion is the resultant of manifold energies. There are forces that build up, and forces that tear down. This zig-zag process is termed rhythm. The underlying principle is one, the manifestations are many. The law of rhythm is universal. We see its operation in nature. The forces that cause the earth to spring forth into new life and beauty in

summer, are counteracted by forces that produce decay and chaos in winter. The same law is apparent in nations. The agencies at work to solidify and strengthen the political and imperial status of a country are opposed by agencies which tend to weaken and undermine the national constitution. We see the principle at work in society. The social and philanthropic institutions which seek the amelioration of our domestic sorrows and social burdens are checked by the drinking, gambling, and other vices of the masses. We find the same law at work in personal life. The development of good habits is seriously hindered by the obtrusion of evil habits. And the Church is no exception to the general rule. The persistent endeavour of the evangelical section to purify the Church and make it more efficient is largely stultified by the superstitious rites introduced by the ritualistic section. In all this there is no new principle, it is ever movement amid conflicting forces. Progress is the zig-zag resultant of variant and ever-developing elements.

2. PERMANENT ELEMENTS AND DIFFERENT MANIFESTATIONS.

There is an element of stability in the universe.

If nature were simply an accumulation of atoms, or disjointed parts thrown into inter-action by chance and held together by blind force, there could be no world-order, no system of laws, no certainty and regularity, no dependence upon a succession of seasons and effects. All would be confusion, entanglement, and meaningless happenings. But such is the regularity or order of nature, the unerring revolutions of star-worlds, that men commit themselves confidently to nature's laws and teachings, assured they will never be put thereby to intellectual confusion. There is a permanent element, too, in human nature which remains amid all developments. There are characteristics of childhood which have not changed since the days of Cain and Abel. There are certain features which have distinguished all men, and communities of men, through all the ages. There are permanent elements in society which remain staple amid all reformation, and permanent elements in nations which are undisturbed amid all revolution. There is *something* in the universe for which the theory of evolution cannot account, and which is not subject to the law of development. The existence of permanent elements is the immovable barrier between the great fundamental "kingdoms" of the world. The mineral remains

mineral; the plant remains plant; the animal remains animal; man remains man. Failure to grasp this doctrine has resulted in much unscientific and godless rationalism. It is simply amusing to see some of the philosophic tyros of our country going about with the works of Darwin under one arm, and the works of Haeckel under the other, loudly proclaiming their descent from the orang-outang.

The permanent elements of nature, life, and history manifest themselves in results, the external form of which is decided by developing circumstances. Change of appearance is not change of nature, and the same cause is ever producing the same effect, with possible variant expressions. This is so in nature. The causes which produced the rainbow upon which Noah fixed his eyes, were at work in the production of the bow which appeared upon yesterday's sky. But the rainbow does not always appear equally brilliant, this depends upon local atmospheric conditions. So in national history. National greed and pride, intolerant oppression of the weak, deliberate neglect of religion, licentious free-thought, and general debauchery resulted in the overthrow of Imperial Rome, and fifteen centuries later the same causes resulted in the French Revolution.

But every revolution, though it be caused by similar forces, does not necessarily manifest the same complexion. This depends upon many conditions of time and place. All this has its analogy in the Church. Some writers are predicting another Reformation. Their prediction is based upon two facts: (1) The *semper idem* principle of Romanism, and (2) The instinctive demand for religious liberty. There are forces at work in England, sometimes under the Protestant name, which, if unchecked, will bring this country once more under the authority of the Pope. But there are Puritan forces in England, perhaps in too many cases slumbering, which will again effect a Reformation as pronounced as that of the sixteenth century. But every reformation of the Church will be coloured by the local conditions of civilisation and Christianity.

3. MOTION IS IN THE DIRECTION OF LEAST RESISTANCE.

This is scarcely a complete statement of the direction of motion. There are forces of attraction and repulsion, and motion consequently may be said to have a threefold cause. Where attractive forces alone are appreciable, motion is in the line of greatest traction; where repulsive forces alone

are appreciable, motion is in the line of least resistance; where both attractive and repulsive forces are appreciable, motion is along the resultant of all the tractions and resistances. "Strictly speaking, this last is the sole law; since by the hypothesis, both forces are everywhere in action."* It is manifest that if the nature of the forces be known, the direction of motion may be foretold. This is not a law that affects physical phenomena alone; it is of universal application. After a careful study of the forces at work in France, it was not difficult for Burke to predict the French Revolution. The seeds of anarchy had been widely sown in French society, the political institutions were rotten, and a spirit of lawlessness prevailed everywhere. There could be but one result, the Revolution. On the same principle Isaiah foretold the overthrow of Egypt and Moab. He studied the forces at work, the trend of history, and the nature of the issue was a foregone fact. There are two fixed principles upon which we may base our prophecies respecting individuals and nations: (1) Sin will be punished, and (2) Goodness will be rewarded.† These are simple statements, but they are fundamental truths. A deep

* Spencer, *First Principles*, pp. 225-7.

† G. A. Smith, *The Book of Isaiah*, Vol. I., p. 373.

knowledge of history, a thorough grasp of national habits, a profound acquaintance with human nature, and a living faith in God will enable modern seers to forecast the issues of the momentous crises through which the nations are passing to-day.

In transferring the principle to the Church it will be sufficient to indicate its operation. The two great forces in the religious world are Romanism and Protestantism. Both of these forces are one-sided. Each expresses a phase of religion which the other ignores. While they only express partial Christianity neither can absolutely supplant the other, and the antagonism must go on. Romanism is too exclusively objective, and Protestantism is too exclusively subjective. Dr. Caird says that Romanism "is the necessary counterpart and complement of Protestantism, opposing the one-sidedness of matter without form to the opposite one-sidedness of form without matter." We do not accept this as a correct estimate of the two systems under review. Doubtless there are truths in the one system which are not sufficiently emphasized in the other, and in so far as this is true the one should learn from the other. But the rock upon which Romanism and Protestantism split is not "form" or "matter," but *authority*,

“the seat of authority in religion.” It is the voice of the Church against the Word of God, the infallibility of the Pope against the infallibility of Christ. On which side is the stronger force? Which system has the greater resisting power? Motion is in the line of greatest traction, progress is along the line of least resistance. Notwithstanding the modern revival of the Romish propaganda in England, and the ritualistic enthusiasm of a section of the Established Church, there can be no doubt that the Protestant sentiment immeasurably preponderates. And when that sentiment is thoroughly aroused it will make short work of the Rome-pampering bishops and the treacherous Jesuitical priests.

4. CONSERVATION OF PRINCIPLE IS NOT CONSERVATISM IN METHOD.

By the phrase “conservation of energy” we understand that the sum-total of forces in the universe can neither be increased nor diminished. According to this doctrine there is no more force in existence now than at the beginning of the solar system, and there will be no more twenty thousand ages hence. This persistent force may be variously manifested, it may be dissipated in one direction to appear in another. But the

quantity of force in the evolution and dissolution of worlds and men remains unchanged. Yet this conservation of force does not beget monotony or uniformity in operation. It is not uniformity we see in nature, but unity in variety; not sameness of effect, but permanence in change. The same forces were at work in the formation of all the stars, but each star shines with its own brilliance, "for one star differeth from another star in glory." All flowers are produced by the same physical conditions, but each flower unfolds according to its own nature. The universe is a panorama of wonders, yet the universe is one. So in national and social life. No new principles of truth and justice, compassion and honesty can be created, but these unchangeable and eternal principles may be made more effective by a wise national and social polity. Lord Bacon, speaking of Robert Cecil, the Earl of Salisbury of his day, said he was a most fit man to keep things from growing worse, but no very fit man to induce things to be much better. This is a fair statement of what is termed "conservatism." But it is not enough to prevent things from becoming worse, it is equally important and imperative to seek to make things better. Progress is not the creation of new forces or principles,

but the directing of old forces and principles into such new channels as the exigencies of the age demand.

“Nor is the lesson different in the religious history of mankind. Churches need many resurrections, many Pentecosts. An unprogressive Church is a dying Church; a retrogressive Church is a dead Church.” From ecclesiastical history it is apparent that Christianity has been kept alive by the periodic re-adaptation of New Testament doctrines and principles. Athanasius revived old truths and saved the Church in the fourth century. St. Francis and St. Dominic re-introduced the Gospel message and saved the Church in the thirteenth century. Luther re-applied the teaching of St. Paul and saved the Church in the sixteenth century. Wesley revived evangelical religion and saved the Church in the eighteenth century. “Surely the lessons of these and many other revivals is that we cannot, we may not, stand still, may not sink into slothful self-satisfaction, must be quick-eared to the continuous teachings of God in history. The paradoxes of yesterday become the commonplaces of to-day. At each stage of God-appointed change men apprehend newly the God who changes not.”*

* Farrar, *Social and Present-Day Questions*, p. 371.

Man is not God, but hath God's end to serve,
Somewhat to cast off, somewhat to become.
Grant this, then man must pass from old to new,
From vain to real, from mistake to fact,
From what once seemed good to what now proves best.
How could man have progression otherwise ?

II.—Particular Laws.

1. SURRENDER OF THE OUTGROWN.

This law of progress is illustrated in the transition from heathenism to civilisation. Native tribes in their progress toward light are constantly giving up what they most cherish. Heathenism in its primitive character is distinguished by an extravagant freedom, it knows no law of legal or social restraint. There is doubtless a strange fascination about this wild life of unbounded liberty. But without restraint there can be no education, no advancement. When scattered people are accumulated under a head or chief, tribal restraints begin and unbridled licence is held in check. With increasing tribal complications the restraining yoke chafes with proportionate severity. The march toward civilisation is marked by more complex and stringent laws. Against this surrender of native liberty there is an inevitable reaction. Here is the secret of tribal rebellions and internecine hostility. There

is no escape from natural law; savage races must surrender their old and cherished customs and possessions in the mighty march of national development. So in the higher forms of civilisation the same law applies. Take the land question. A few cling to the old system of absolute ownership as essential to the maintenance of humanising and dignified relations. We may denounce the system on the ground of the hardships and injustices which it imposes upon the burdened tenantry. We may advocate the nationalisation of the land and its distribution among the worthy subjects of the State. But this policy comes into collision with the ideal picture of the benevolent landlord, hence it is opposed. It is evident that if the land-allotment system should triumph the great landed proprietors would have to surrender much, in many cases that which they most prize. No country has yet attained its perfect or final system of government. The best political system of to-day is but the precursor of a better. A new national policy is ever and anon called for, the old gets outgrown and becomes a clog in the wheel of progress. The introduction of each new civic era necessitates the surrender of many time-honoured and cherished forms.

The Church is no exception to the law of progress by surrender. The ideal of the Church of Rome has been that all temporal and spiritual power should be centred in the Pontiff. Who can picture the condition of Europe had the bishops of Rome preserved the mighty power of which they had slowly possessed themselves? In the sixteenth century Romanism was compelled to surrender her fondest hope. That Popedom felt bitterly this giving up of power was evident from the Bulls excommunicating Luther, Henry VIII., and others who helped to break the Papal chains. The Protestant religion which resulted, however, was not a new Christianity, nor even a new Church, but rather a new phase in the development of the Christian Church in the world. When the Romanist asked: "Where was your religion before the Reformation?" the Protestant replied: "Where was your face before it was washed?" It may be that the face of Christianity will need washing many a time yet. We have no authority for concluding that Protestantism will be the final form of Christianity. It may be that future reformations will change the expression of the Church as palpably as it was changed three hundred years ago. It is already evident that the Anglican Church

must surrender a number of ecclesiastical anomalies in order to come into line with New Testament ideas and meet the just and devout claims of the age. The dogmas of an unbroken succession, an essential hierarchy, a State Church, a sacrificial Communion, a Romish confessional, and others, must be changed or relinquished. The real truths underlying these dogmas must be stripped of their traditional and superstitious encumbrances and expressed in a Scriptural and common-sense light. Nonconformity, too, must surrender in order to advance. If any Free-Church institution, form or custom, has been outgrown, let us not foolishly bewail its surrender. If the tastes and demands of the masses are no longer met by many of the old methods, let the Free Churches strike out into new paths and adopt a new policy in order to attract and save them. If large numbers of the educated young people are inclined to accept broader views of the Scriptures, the Church, the Sacraments, let not the Free Churches estrange them by narrow doctrines and arbitrary decrees. If all believers are New Testament "priests," and equally entitled to share the responsibilities and government of the Church, let no Nonconformist ministry assume a superiority of rank and wrest from the laity their Divine rights. Let me appeal to

Methodism in particular. If the three-years limit to pastoral oversight in the same congregation be found detrimental to the prosperity of any Church, why not seek legislative authority to abandon the crippling rule? If the autocracy which the Conference invests in superintendent ministers be found intolerable to progressive Christian laymen, why doggedly preserve the feudal relic? If the offices of Connexional funds could be managed equally well or better by experienced business laymen, why monopolise the Departments by ministerial officers? This enumeration need not be extended. The unhallowed hankering after the "flesh pots" of Egypt is the dark Nemesis over a considerable section of Nonconformity. It is time for the Free Churches to learn the law of progress by surrender, a law expressed by St. Paul as he watched the Christian Church rising out of the dying and useless elements of Judaism: "In that He saith, A new covenant, He hath made the first old. But that which is becoming old and waxeth aged is nigh unto vanishing away."

2. STRUGGLE FOR EXISTENCE.

Nature and history teach us that there is a struggle for existence, and that in the case of

plants and animals only the fittest survive. This phase of the great law of evolution is capable of wide application. Life begins through birth-pains, nations rise amid the pangs of rebellion, Churches grow out of the throbs of reformation. But there is no growth without struggle, no reformation without agitation. A recent writer says, with a tinge of sarcasm: "By some persons agitation would seem to be seriously regarded as a condition of progress, even in a Christian Church." Everything depends upon the interpretation of the word "agitation." If it means a movement deliberately planned, maliciously purposed, and cunningly carried on with the object of wrecking the polity and blighting the spirituality of the Church, then, doubtless, it is anything but "a condition of progress." But if by "agitation" is meant a movement inspired by love to God and man, planned with devoutest zeal, and urged with the sole object of benefiting the religious life of men, then unquestionably it is "a condition of progress, even in a Christian Church." New occasions demand new methods, new methods involve a change of polity, every change of polity must be initiated, the initiation of a reform requires a reformer. No proposed reformation at first meets with universal acceptance. If we wait for the

whole Church to be agreed before we suggest a change, the *status quo* will remain till doomsday. On the other hand, if we do not wait till the whole Church is agreed before we suggest a reform, there will be opposition, discussion, and agitation. The inference is that agitation, pure in its inception, charitable in its spirit, and lofty in its object, is essential to progress and to the expanding life of the Church.

The most beneficial reforms have grown out of agitations which have been initiated in strong spiritual convictions, and which have been conducted with Christlike persistence. The blind attempt arbitrarily to suppress free expression of opinion will not ensure that rest and peace in the Church for which some writers pathetically plead. The "hush up" policy of some timid and ingenuous divines is neither so honest nor so successful as the policy of frank discussion. When "a murmuring" began among the people, "the Apostles took the most effective plan to quiet the trouble which had arisen when they took the people into their confidence."* It is not the free expression of opinion or agitation which we have to fear, but the bitterness of personal innuendoes which so often enters into the controversy. The

* Stokes, *The Acts of the Apostles*, Vol. I., p. 264.

Church has never been free from all external opposition, nor from all internal agitation. Systems of doctrine and forms of government have been born and matured amid disputation. The process of ecclesiastical development has been promoted by the fearless utterances and Apostolic zeal of a succession of Christian men. Are we to silence them? Are we to suppress freedom of thought and expression? Are we to obstruct all movement because it threatens to supersede the dead past? It is better to be aroused and kept awake by holy agitation and consecrated struggle than to relapse into, and remain in, religious drowsiness and spiritual inanition. There is always need for a few lay and clerical eagles to stir up the too comfortable ecclesiastical nest.

3. ADAPTATION TO ENVIRONMENT.

While there is life in an organism it may be resuscitated from apparent death. Some physiologists have held the doctrine of revivification; it has been alleged that Tardigrades and Rotifers can be restored to actual life from positive death. It is, of course, well known that certain animals have a marvellous power of maintaining vitality in a prolonged state of immobility. Certain molluscs

can go several years without eating, and remain in a state of complete torpor; but in this case their organs retain sufficient fluid to prevent existence from being extinguished. In such instances resuscitation is possible because life has never been absolutely excluded. The distinguished microscopist, Ehrenberg, says of the resurrectionist-physiologists: "They only resuscitate animals which are not dead." But when an organism is really dead, its tissues desiccated, there cannot be even the semblance of revivification. The phoenix only lives as a myth, and the dead no longer issue from their tombs at the voice of Elijah. In the Church there are some institutions that have fallen into inaction and distressing torpor, which could, and ought to be, revived. There are others which, through their inutility and long disuse, have lost all vitality and are mere hindering bodies of death; they cannot be restored, and the attempt to restore them would be absurd. Much time and energy have been needlessly expended in the Church by persons zealously endeavouring to resuscitate obsolete and buried ecclesiastical forms and creeds.

Only those institutions, rites, and doctrines of the Church should be resuscitated which are capable of being adapted to the modern environ-

ment. Reformers who attempt to modernise the Church are always liable to unjust criticism. When Galileo attested the reality of the spots on the sun, some theologians, wedded to false philosophical ideas, stubbornly repudiated the fact. They maintained that the pure and radiant star was perfectly immaculate, and that its pretended blemishes only existed on the glasses of the telescopes of astronomers. Those who venture to point out defects in Church organisation are open to a similar charge. It is said by some that the asserted dark spots in the polity of the Church exist only in the prejudiced and discontented minds of the agitators. Needless to say, this is a total misrepresentation of the spirit and purpose of all progressive Church leaders. In seeking to adapt the organism of the Church to its inevitable environment, these leaders are simply yielding to a necessary law of progress. We must not confound adaptation of method with compromise of principle. The Anglican Convocation in Westminster Hall is not like the Council in the Upper-room at Jerusalem. Yet there is no necessary change of principle. Every alteration of tactics, every strategic movement to bring the Church into line with the law of evolution, is in danger of being attributed to vacilla-

tion of mind and sacrifice of principle. Consistency is too often gauged by its superficial form. Apparent inconsistency of action may be compatible with real consistency of purpose. "Men do not always understand the meaning of consistency. They call that changefulness which ought sometimes to be called growth; they charge some men with being given to change who simply yield themselves to the outworking, to the great evolutionary laws, which turn buds into blossoms, and blossoms into fruit."*

4. INCLUSION OF DIVERSE ELEMENTS.

One of the Anglo-Saxon kings, Æthelred, governed the country so badly that the Danes alarmed the people by their plundering incursions. The king was too cowardly to fight his enemy, and he attempted to induce the Danes to leave the country by paying them large sums of money. To meet this enormous expenditure he levied a tax of a shilling on every hide of land. This tax, *Danegelt*, was a dark blot upon the English escutcheon. Of course it utterly failed. The Danes came in larger numbers after this, and larger bribes had to be given to satisfy their growing ambition. At length money failed to

* Parker, *Studies in Texts*, Vol. I., p. 34.

satisfy the Danes, and Æthelred had to resort to other means. His next expedient was less chivalrous than the *Danegelt*. He devised a scheme of murdering his enemies, and on the eve of St. Brice's festival nearly all the Danes were cruelly and treacherously put to death. Here are two methods of silencing enemies, bribing and murdering, and both are to be equally condemned. The later action of King Alfred is much to be preferred. By clever stratagem he gained a knowledge of the Danish camp, and then rallied his forces and met his foes in open battle. He gained a great victory at Ethandune in Wiltshire. He did not murder Guthrum, the Danish commander, and his followers, but generously gave them East Anglia, where they settled down in safety. Shortly afterwards they accepted the Christian religion, which Alfred did so much to inculcate among his people. The principle illustrated in these historical allusions is this: factious elements and rival parties are more truly conquered by a policy of conciliation and inclusion, than by a policy of bribery and exclusion.

Professor Caird says: "There are two periods in the history of an idea: one in which it shows itself as a tyrannical force that seeks to crush all rivals, and to substitute itself in their place; and

another in which, secure of victory, it begins to make room for its former opponents within the domain it has conquered."* The truth of this statement has been strikingly illustrated in the history of the Church. Unfortunately the Church has spent long periods in attempting "to crush all rivals and to substitute itself in their place," and consequently the Church has been slow "to make room for its former opponents within the domain it has conquered." Macaulay draws a suggestive contrast between the elasticity of the Romish Church and the rigidity of the Anglican Church. A man like Bunyan finds no encouragement for his peculiar gifts in the Church of England. The alternatives presented to him are either to be silent or schismatic. Bunyan soon makes his choice, and in a few weeks the Church has lost for ever a hundred families. "Far different is the policy of Rome. The ignorant enthusiast whom the Anglican Church makes an enemy and, whatever the polite and learned may think, a most dangerous enemy, the Catholic Church makes a champion. . . . At Rome the Countess of Huntingdon would have a place in the calendar as St. Selina, and Mrs. Fry would be foundress and first Superior of the Blessed Order of Sisters of the

* *The Evolution of Religion*, p. 261.

Gaols. Place Ignatius Loyola at Oxford; he is certain to become the head of a formidable secession. Place John Wesley at Rome; he is certain to be the first general of a new society devoted to the interests and honour of the Church.”* There are distinctions and divisions among Nonconformists which probably could have been averted by a policy of comprehensive inclusion. There are Established and Free Presbyterians; there are Congregational Churches within the Union, others without; there are “Strict” and “Liberal” Baptist Churches; there are Methodist Churches of many types. Doubtless, many of these divisions might have been prevented by judiciously imitating the elastic policy of Romanism, rather than following the rigid intolerance of Anglicanism. In the Church of Christ there are occasional ebullitions of religious fervour; sects are initiated which threaten secession. To avoid schism and disruption the zealous spirits of the Church must not be bribed to keep the peace, nor excommunicated for non-compliance with custom. They must be met fairly, treated generously, and, if possible, afforded a sphere of labour within the domain of the Church. “Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same

* *Essays*, III., pp. 131-4.

Spirit. And there are diversities of ministrations, and the same Lord. And there are diversities of workings, but the same God, who worketh all things in all."

5. LIMITLESS POSSIBILITY.

We have no positive proof that man is the crown of the animate creation. It has been said that at present "in man mind bears the same proportion to matter as fifty to fifty, with slight differences more or less, for sometimes mind and sometimes matter predominates. In a subsequent creation, supposing that in which man was formed not to be the last, there would probably be organisations in which the mind would act more freely, and where it would be in the proportion of seventy-five to twenty-five. It results from these considerations that man was formed at the most passive epoch of existence on our earth. Man is a sad middle state between the animal and the angel; he aspires to elevated knowledge and cannot reach it, albeit our modern philosophers fancy such is not the case. Man wishes to fathom the first cause of all that exists, and cannot attain to it; with fewer intellectual faculties he would not have the presumption to want to know these causes, which, on the other

hand, would be quite clear to him if he were endowed with a more extended mind." We do not know the final form of any physical organism; this is a secret which, as Pliny strikingly said, *latet in majestate naturæ*. But we hold there can never be a higher type of life than rational life, self-conscious life. This is the type of man's life, and it is akin to the Divine. To say that the human mind is capable of development is simply to admit that man comes within the universal law of evolution. Then, if man himself is capable of, and must yield to, a process of endless progression, how much more are the institutions and works of men subject to the same process? All nature is active, inactivity is death. The motionless pool stagnates into pestilence. The air is kept pure by gentle breeze or raging storm. The Church must advance by wise reforms or be shattered by revolutions.

There is no finality. Across the banner of the Church write PLUS ULTRA. Behold, Christ lives! Let not the Church coffin Him in orthodox formulæ. Behold, He pardons sin, He sanctifies! Let not the Church interdict the free action of His grace. "Behold, I make all things new." He is constantly making (*ποιῶ*) all things new. Let the Church fall into line with the eternal progression.

INDEX.

	PAGE		PAGE
Agazziz	3, 42	Descartes	42
Altruism	37	Diaconate, The	111
Aristotle	41	Disestablishment	262-274
Athanasius	6	Disraeli	32
Augustine	6, 120	Dissenter	228
Bacon	42	<i>Ecclesia</i>	50, 54, 57-59
Bannerman, Rev., D.D.	51, 186	Ecclesiastical Polity ...	138
Beet, Dr. Agar	85	Edgar, Dr. McCheyne	65, 199
Bible, Revised Version	39	Elders, Appointment of...	153
Bourrier, M.	27	Episcopalianism	144
Briggs, Dr. C. A.	18	Equality of Men... ..	183
Butler, Bishop	43	Eusebius	121
<i>Cabala</i> , The	11	Fairbairn, Dr. A. M.	78, 100, 108
Caird, Dr. E. 184, 249,	299	Farrar, Dean	287
Calvin	101	Findlay, Prof. G. G. ...	65
Church, The	49, 61	Free Church Teaching ...	123
Church and Kingdom	62-65	Freeman, E. A.	236
Church and State	220-274	Froude, J. A.	22, 29
Church, Government of	137-176	Galileo	42, 297
Church, Membership of	72-77	God, Conceptions of ...	5-8
Clement of Alexandria	6	Gregory, Dr. Benjamin ...	211
Clergy, Celibacy of ...	194	Haeckel	3
Conference, The Peace	35	Harrison, Frederic	33
Congregationalism	139, 170	Hatch, Dr. E. 10, 23, 80,	197
Connexionalism 165,	170-176	Hildebrand	4
Constantine	4	History <i>versus</i> Dogma ...	124
Criticism, Biblical ...	38	Hooker	186
Darwin	3	Hort, Dr. F. J. A. 51, 129,	148
Deacons	155, 157	Hume	14
Deaconesses	156	Huxley, Late Prof.	43
Denney, Dr. James ...	71		

	PAGE		PAGE
Ignatius	89	Parker, Dr. Joseph ...	298
Independency	165-170	Patriotism	28
Irenæus	120	Paul, Apostleship of	101-103
Jacob, Dr. G. A. ...	187, 188	Pearson, Bishop ...	121
Judas, Apostleship of	... 104	Pessimism	31-35
Knight, Charles 226	Pliny	72, 303
Labour, Capital and	... 28	Pope, Rev. W. B. ...	189
Laity	181	Potter, Bishop ...	116
Laity, New Testament		Preaching, Importance of	158
Position of	182	Presbyterianism...	141
Laity and Sacraments	187-190	Presbyteriate, The	108-111
Laity in Methodism	207-218	Pressensé	186
Liddon, Canon	116	Priesthood	96, 97, 182
Lightfoot, Bishop	... 125	Progress, General	
Lucretius	7	Grounds of	278-288
Luther	4, 42, 43, 83	Progress, Particular Laws	
Macaulay	17, 300	of	288-303
Manning, Cardinal	... 124	Protestantism and Pros-	
Meyer	71, 98, 155	perity	44-46
Mill, J. S.	36	Protestantism and Science	41
Ministry, Free Church		Ramsay, Professor ...	128
View of	122-133	Reformation, The Place	
Ministry, Sacerdotal		of	17-21
Claims	115-121	Rigg, Dr. J. H. ...	88, 113, 163
Ministry, Scriptural Doc-		Romanism and the Bible	
trine of	96	12, 30
Mivart, St. George	... 43	Romanism and the Con-	
Morison, Dr. James	... 98	fessional	73
Mystery, Fascination of	11-13	Romanism in France	... 27
Newman, Cardinal	13-15, 118	Ryle, Bishop	200
Newton	42	Sacerdotalism	5, 100, 127
Nonconformist	228	Scepticism	13
Nonconformist Claim	... 79	Slater, Prof. W. F. ...	130
Optimism	35-44	Smith, Dr. G. A. ...	283
Ordination	127-133	Smith, Robertson ...	97
Origen	6	Spencer, Herbert	276, 283
Oxford Movement, The	4, 74	Spirituality <i>versus</i> Ex-	
Paganism	8-10	ternalism	23-27
		State-Church :	
		A Modern Invention ...	231
		Injustices Involved in	258
		Reforms Demanded in	263

	PAGE		PAGE
State-Control :		Uhlhorn	8, 237
Unscriptural	243	Ultramontane Error ...	21
Checks Spontaneity ...	247	Uniformity, Act of ...	83, 228
Cannot be Permanent	252	Union, Organic	85
Stephen, Sir James	45	Unions, Trades	37
Stillingfleet	137		
Stokes, Dr. G. T....	101, 294	Vaughan, Dean	267
Swift, Dean	35	Vinet	238
Synagogue	50	Voltaire	45
Taylor, Jeremy	16	Walsh, Walter	77
<i>Teaching of the Apostles,</i>		War, Ill Effects of ...	33-35
<i>The</i>	40, 41	Watson, Dr. John	33-39
Tertullian... ..	120	Wesley	43, 84, 130, 173
Tractarians	14, 114, 117	Wotton, Sir Henry ...	30
Trench, Archbishop ...	50	Wycliffe	4
Tyranny, Revolt Against	17		

LONDON
W. SPEAIGHT AND SONS, PRINTERS,
FETTER LANE, E.C.

